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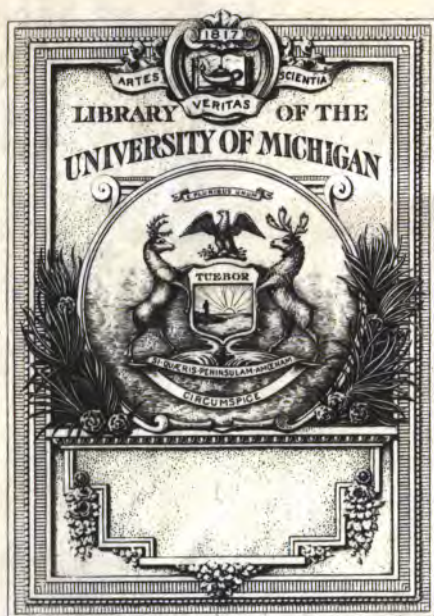
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ADVERTISEMENT.

It is now generally understood, that the Debate, in the House of Commons, on the 23d of June, 1825, on Mr. Buxton's Motion relative to the Demolition of the Methodist Chapel and Mission House in Barbadoes, and the Expulsion of Mr. Shrewsbury the Missionary, from that Island, has excited much interest throughout this country.

The result of that Debate being of great importance to the community at large, and especially to the inhabitants of the West-Indies, considerable pains have been taken to render as correct as possible, the following Report of the discussion,—a discussion alike memorable, for the plain and undisputed Narrative of Facts contained in the Speech of the Honourable Mover—for the unqualified expression of indignation, on the part of His Majesty's Government, at the scandalous and daring Outrage which had been committed—for the testimony which was borne, by every Speaker, to the uniformly good conduct of the Wesleyan Missionaries in the West-Indies—and, for the unanimous declaration of the Commons of England, that there shall be Protection and Religious Toleration, for all His Majesty's subjects in that part of His Dominions.

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DEBATE,

§c. §c. §c.

Mr. FOWELL BUXTON rose, and addressed the House to the following effect :—

I rise to state the Case of Mr. Shrewsbury, a Wesleyan Missionary ; and I have, as it was my duty, revolved in my mind, in what way I could bring the matter forward, at once favourably to the cause itself, but with the least possible demand on the patience of the House ; and I have concluded, that it is my duty to confine myself very much to a matter-of-fact detail ; to give you a plain, dry, abstemious narrative of the events, in the order in which they occurred, leaving those events to speak for themselves—as they do, indeed, pretty loudly. And, as I shall endeavour to spare the House all extraneous matter, so I hope they will permit me to put them in full possession of the facts, and to give them a history—and a remarkable history it is—of the events which occurred in Barbadoes.

I now proceed, without preface, without apology, without even remarking—what, indeed, is too obvious to remark—the immeasurable difference between the mode in which this question will now be brought forward, and the manner in which a similar question was introduced last year, by my honourable and learned friend, the Member for Winchelsea.

Mr. Shrewsbury was, for some time, a Methodist Minister in England ; and conducted himself entirely to the satisfaction of those with whom he was connected. In the year 1816, he was sent as a Missionary to Tortola. He remained there two years ; and, on his departure, Mr. Porter, then Senior Member of Council, now President of the Island, presented him with this testimony :—

“ I do hereby certify, that the Rev. William Shrewsbury, a preacher in the Wesleyan connexion, resided in this Island for about two years : during which time, his conduct was such as entitled him to the respect of this community.

“ GEO. R. PORTER,
Tortola, One of His Majesty's Council
April 7, 1818.” for the Virgin Islands.”

In 1818, Mr. Shrewsbury went to Grenada. After he had been there somewhat more than a year, he applied to the Governor, Major-Gen-

ral Rial, for his private subscription towards the erection of an enlarged chapel. This is his answer, through the hands of his Secretary, Colonel Wilson. It contained a check for sixty-six pounds, the Governor's donation, and ten pounds, the donation of Colonel Wilson ; and concluded with these words :—

“ In making this communication to you, I am likewise desired to convey to you his Excellency's approbation of your general conduct, during the time you have resided in this Government ; and particularly of the mild and temperate manner which has marked the exercise of your religious duties.

“ J. WILSON, Lieut-Colonel,
Secretary.”

Mr. Ross, of Clarke's Court, Grenada,—than whom, I understand, there is not a more respectable man in the West Indies—the proprietor of one large estate, the manager of twelve others, and having under his superintendence a body of between two and three thousand negroes,—having daily opportunities of witnessing Mr. Shrewsbury's conduct while in that Island, thus wrote of him, in a private letter, at the time :—“ Mr. Shrewsbury is a superior man, who would do honour to any Church or Society of Christians.” This same Mr. Ross happened

to be in England, when the news arrived of the disturbances in Barbadoes, and he had the generosity to write this testimony :—

“ Having had an opportunity of becoming intimately acquainted with Mr. Shrewsbury during his residence in Grenada, whence he went to Barbadoes, I can with great truth testify, that I never knew a more pious or a better man. Possessed of natural cheerfulness of temper, and without any thing of austerity or moroseness in his manners, he discharged the duties of his profession with zeal and assiduity, and acquired the good-will and esteem of the whole community ; and it was to the great regret of all who knew him, that he was taken from us. I believe Mr. Shrewsbury to be incapable of doing an injury to any human being ; and I am convinced he was eminently useful as a Christian Minister, both among the free people and the slaves, in the Island of Grenada.”

Mr. Shrewsbury had devoted himself laboriously to the improvement of the negroes, and with the best effects. Instruction was gaining ground ; marriages became more frequent ; the marriage tie was held more sacred ; a more orderly and moral deportment was observed among the negroes ; and, in short, many of those changes so much desired by this House—so

ardently looked forward to by the people of England—but not more ardently, I feel it but justice to say, than by many benevolent and respectable planters, followed his ministry. But, while he had devoted himself to the improvement of the negroes, he had won the confidence and esteem of the planters; and left the Island with the love of the Slaves, the approbation of the Masters, and universal testimonies of regret at his departure.

In 1820, Mr. Shrewsbury went to Barbadoes; and, I must explain why he was sent there. A spirit of fierce religious persecution has long prevailed in that Island. The papers laid on the table of this House, in 1802 and 1805, give painful demonstration that it existed then: and it will appear but too clearly, before I sit down, that the same spirit prevails, or rather rages, at the present moment. If the Mission which had been established was to be continued, and a new Missionary sent, it required a man possessing great, but opposite qualities—great prudence, or he would do too much in the eyes of the planters—great zeal, or he would do too little for the Slaves—great fortitude, a deep impression in his own heart of the paramount importance of the duties he had to discharge:—without these, he would assuredly have been crushed by

the opposition he was certain to encounter. But, withal, he must be a man of a meek, quiet, uncontentious spirit—calculated, by his gentleness, to subdue and soften those unfortunate jealousies and prejudices. These were his qualifications. And, besides, it happened accidentally, but most fortunately, that he was in some degree a West-Indian, both in feeling and connexion. He is married to the daughter of a West-India planter ; and is thus, in some degree, linked to the West-India interest. He was any thing, rather than a warm partizan of the Abolitionists. I know he was subsequently accused of being an Agent of the “ villainous African Society,” and particularly of corresponding with me ; and I understand, that persons in the West-Indies, who ought to be respectable, have asserted, that they have seen letters from him to me, and from me to him. My answer is—I never received or wrote a letter to him in my life—that I did not know that such a man existed in the world, until I happened to take up a newspaper, and there read, with some astonishment, that he was going to be hanged for corresponding with me.

And here it may be as well to state—it may allay jealousies—that with the Missionaries in the West-Indies—Church of England, Wesleyan,

Moravian, or London Society—I have had no communication. Indeed, I was told by one of the heads of those Societies in England, when I first broached the subject, that though they agreed with me, and their feelings were mine about Slavery, yet, standing in a peculiar situation, and trusted with the confidence of many of the planters, they did not feel justified in furnishing me with any culpatory intelligence. I blame them for this. I think they ought to have told the truth, whether it made for or against the system. But, I think it hard that they should be blamed by me and my friends for saying nothing, and blamed more severely by other parties, for saying a great deal too much.

But, to proceed. In this peculiar predicament, and wanting a man of such peculiar qualifications, the Wesleyan Missionary Society selected, from the whole body of their Ministers, for this arduous and difficult post, Mr. Shrewsbury. And, during the whole time he remained in Barbadoes, he justified their choice—exhibiting the same moderation, forbearance, discretion, abstinence from all political interference, which become a Minister of Religion at all times and in all countries, but which are the indispensable qualifications of a Minister of the

Gospel, placed in circumstances so difficult, and having to tread so narrow a path, as that which is chalked out for a pastor of Slaves in a society of planters. I shall be able to shew, by indisputable documents—such documents as satisfied the Governor of St. Vincent, with whom Mr. Shrewsbury found an asylum, and who was bound to ascertain his innocence, before he permitted him to preach in his Government—by documents which will convince every man of candour,—that, during the whole time he exercised his ministry in Barbadoes, he exercised the same discretion, and forbearance, and silence upon Slavery; and preached nothing to the negroes, but obedience and fidelity to their masters.

But, this point will not be disputed. I say so confidently; because, his enemies have ransacked his life, private and public, in order to find, if it were to be found, some excuse for their cruelty towards him. They have found nothing; and he stands delivered over to universal execration, and under sentence of banishment—but, uncharged with any offence in his conduct, his conversation, and his doctrine.

In February 1820, Mr. Shrewsbury went to Barbadoes. In the March following, he wrote home, as he was required to do by the rules of

the Society to which he belonged, stating the condition in which he found his congregation. A painful description no doubt it was, and must have been, if he spoke the truth ; but, in that letter I find nothing harsh, nothing exaggerated, nothing sarcastic. Now, it may be said, and probably, as my honourable friend, the Under Secretary for the Colonial Department, has nothing else to say, he may maintain, either that that Letter ought not to have been required from him—or, being required, he ought not to have sent it—or, being sent, it ought not to have been published. That is a doctrine which can be maintained by no Member of this House ; but, least of all, by the Honourable Secretary ; for, it so happens, that Lord Bathurst, the whole body of the Clergy in the West-Indies, and this House, have done precisely the same thing. In 1816, Lord Bathurst addressed a Circular to all the Clergy in the West-Indies, requesting to know the moral and religious condition of the Negroes. The Clergy sent their answers—true, no doubt ; but containing statements infinitely more affronting to the Planters, and more mournful to every friend of humanity, than any thing which is to be found in Mr. Shrewsbury's Letter ; and these answers were published by this House. So that, if it be said,

such information ought not to have been asked—Lord Bathurst asked it: or, that it ought not to have been given—the whole body of the West-India Clergy gave it: or, that it ought not to have been published—the House of Commons published it. In point of fact, however, this letter had nothing to do with subsequent events. It was not heard of in the Colony for three years, even by Mr. Shrewsbury; and was only raked up at last, when an excuse was wanted for a persecution.

Mr. Shrewsbury remained in the Island three years and three quarters. During the first three years and a half, he had to endure the common lot of a Methodist Missionary—some persecution, or, if that be too hard a term, some annoyance, some detraction, some bitterness of spirit, evincing itself in petty insults. For example: some of the gentry of Barbadoes felt it to be their duty to walk into his chapel on Sunday, during the time of service, with their hats on, whistling a tune, and keeping time to their own music, by drumming against the benches. In short, something of that little, pitiful, spiteful, ignominious warfare, with which men of paltry minds love to vex those whose stricter lives are a comment and a reproach to their own. Of all this I make but little. The

man who undertakes the high character of a Missionary must be prepared for trifles of this kind : his is an office, than which none is more truly honourable ; but, before he embraces it, he should count the cost, and remember that, accepting it, he must be prepared to accept also pains and perils abroad, shame and contempt at home. For these slight insults Mr. Shrewsbury had full compensation, in an increasing and improving congregation—in a very large school for Mulatto and Negro children—in the favour of several respectable planters—and in the approbation of the Clergy ; from many of whom he received at all times, but more particularly in the moment of trial, demonstrations of kindness, which ought not to be forgotten.

In June 1823, a fiercer spirit of persecution arose. Mr. Shrewsbury was publicly accused in the streets, in open day, as a villain ; and this, as he says, not by the mere rabble, but by the great vulgar—merchants from their stores, and individuals in the garb of gentlemen. He was assailed in the newspapers, under the name of “ Mister Rueful ;” and his antagonists were under the necessity of bearing testimony to the purity of his conduct. “ Look at his actions,” they say ; “ hear his sermons, and

you would say the man is a Saint"—a Saint, not in the sarcastic sense in which it is applied to certain members of this House, who would be very well pleased to bear the name, if they did but deserve it—which they do not : but, in its true sense. "Observe him, hear him," they said, "and you will think him a Saint ; but, under this garb of sanctity, by his praying, preaching, and teaching, he is undermining the West-India interest ; and is very little better than an enemy of Slavery." He bore this, as his religion taught him to bear it, with the utmost humility. "I was as a deaf man, that heard not," is his own true description of his behaviour.

On Sunday, October the 5th, 1823, Riot the First took place. A large concourse of persons assembled round the chapel, for the avowed purpose of disturbing the congregation. They came provided with a number of thin bottles, filled with oil, assafoetida, and aquafortis, prepared, as there is every reason to think, at the shop of one of the Magistrates, who is a chemist and druggist. These bottles were suddenly discharged into the midst of a congregation of some hundreds of females. One of them was aimed at Mr. Shrewsbury's head, and narrowly missed its mark, but wounded another man. A second

was wounded in the shoulder ; and one of the bottles discharging its contents on the bosom of a Mulatto female, burnt her severely. A lawyer, Mr. Newsome, chose his decorous station on the railing of the Communion Table, and cheered and encouraged the rioters. Two sons of the Magistrate and Chemist were seen conspicuously active. Upon this discharge, the utmost confusion arose. The females were greatly alarmed ; and, in point of fact, one-third of the congregation ran away. The preacher retired into the Vestry, in order to protect his wife, who was near her confinement. Having placed her in security, he began to shew somewhat of the manliness of his character. He returned to the Chapel, reascended the pulpit, and, amidst the rattling of stones without and almost suffocating heat within, the windows being closed, resumed and concluded the service.

The next day, he offered a reward of thirty pounds for the detection of any of the rioters : but no one came forward to give evidence ; and he soon found, that the interruption met with general approbation. Passing by the shop of a considerable merchant, where a number of gentlemen were collected, he was assailed by such remarks as these—"Serve the fellow right."

“ They ought to have gone and pulled the fellow from the pulpit.” And a Magistrate, who was also Senior Member of the Council, told a person of credit, that “ if a sufficient number would join him, he would go and pull down the Chapel at noon-day.” The name of this Magistrate is Mr. Haines. I mention it, not only to do him honour, but for the purpose of remarking, that persons in a higher station of life were the real instigators of the events which followed; and for the purpose also of stating, that this same Mr. Haines continues a magistrate, and, as a magistrate, is the protector of the Negroes, the dispenser of justice to the Mulattoes, and the guardian of the public peace. How he acted in these capacities will presently appear.

On the Wednesday evening, Mr. Shrewsbury had his usual week-day service, and experienced somewhat of the same kind of disturbance; but not to the same extent. On the Friday, which is kept in Barbadoes as a fast day, in commemoration of the great storm of 1780, the good joke which he heard from all quarters was, “ While you are preaching of the storm within doors, you shall have a storm without.” And, a storm he had; but not a severe one. I, therefore, pass on.

On Sunday, October the 12th, while Mr.

Shrewsbury was preparing for service, one of his congregation came to him privately, and stated, that something desperate was intended that day. He, however, determined to proceed. He went down to the Chapel; and, I will tell you, in his own words, what he saw—

“ As I came down from the dwelling-house, and entered the side door of the Chapel, the sight was really intimidating. Without the Chapel, and throughout the whole length of the street, there was an immense concourse of people, some breathing out threatenings and slaughter, and others merely lookers-on: within the Chapel, besides a fine congregation of my regular and serious hearers, there were planted all around the pulpit, and by the pulpit stairs, from twenty to thirty of the gentlemen-mob, apparently ready for any mischief, when those without should make a beginning. Just as we arose from prayer, two men, wearing masks, and having swords and pistols, came galloping down the street; and, presenting their pistols opposite the door, they fired; but only one pistol went off, and that discharged its contents, not within the door amongst the congregation, but without, beside the window, so that the men planted round the pulpit were completely disappointed: for it seems the design was to have

fired crackers amongst the females, to set their clothes on fire ; when advantage would have been taken of the confusion, to have wreaked their vengeance on me."

It so happened, that two officers were at the Chapel that evening, and their servants were holding their horses outside. These men, having none of the feelings of true Barbadians, but feeling as every Englishman would feel under such circumstances,—and as I trust we shall shew by our vote to-night that we feel—thinking that the authors of such an outrage ought not to be unpunished, pursued them and put them to flight. This spirited attack disconcerting their intention of returning, prevented mischief, and possibly saved the life of the Missionary. As it was, the awning of the window burst into flames. A cry of fire was raised without. The mob of gentlemen within were ready ; when one of the members, with great presence of mind, ran in and said, "Do not be alarmed: it is only a cracker." Tranquillity was restored ; and Mr. Shrewsbury finished the service.

And now I must tell you of whom the mob consisted. Not a negro—not a mulatto. It consisted of planters, merchants, and traders. Mr. Shrewsbury has given me an apt illustration

of their quality, by saying, "Divide the whole population into four parts—these were the second and third—neither the very highest nor the very lowest."

You will suppose that, by this time, the Magistrates remembered that they had a duty to discharge—saw that the disturbance began to wear an alarming aspect, and interfered. One of them did interfere. He summoned Mr. Shrewsbury before him—not, however, to state the nature and circumstances of the riot, or to identify the rioters—but, as an offender himself, for not having enrolled himself in the Militia. From which, and from all military service, he being a licensed minister of religion, is exempt, under the Toleration Act: but, it was imagined, that that Act, not being specially mentioned in the Militia Act, did not extend to Barbadoes. Availing himself, therefore, of this pretext, the Magistrate summoned Mr. Shrewsbury to a public meeting, where he knew that, if he had attended, he would be torn in pieces by the mob. The name of this Magistrate is Mr. Moore.

On Wednesday, the 15th, Mr. Shrewsbury determined to hold his usual service; but, so large a concourse of persons assembled, and their conduct and language were so alarming, that he

was glad to escape to the house of a relation ; and he never after returned. But, in order to shew how planned and organized the whole thing was, a party of gentlemen galloped down from the race-ground at seven o'clock, drew up in front of the Chapel, and, seeing the windows and doors closed, cried out, " the coward has fled ; the coward has run away ;" and retired, amid the plaudits of the mob.

The next day, Mr. Shrewsbury waited on the Governor ; and, as there is some slight immaterial difference between the report of the Governor and of Mr. Shrewsbury, as to what took place at that interview, I shall follow the version of the Governor, in all points in which they differ. After introducing himself, Mr. Shrewsbury said, " My congregation are not suffered to worship God in peace." The Governor advised him to apply to the Magistrates : meaning, but not stating, that if they did not do their duty, he would afford him protection. Mr. Shrewsbury said, " There can be no use in applying to the Magistrates : they are among the bitterest of my enemies ; and nothing can prove it more than this : three years and a half have I been in the colony ; I have never been summoned to serve in the Militia ; but now that the mob are bearing me down, the Magistrate,

instead of affording me protection, summons me to a meeting, where he knows that if I appear I shall lose my life." Mr. Shrewsbury retired, saying, "In applying to your Excellency I have done my duty : I can do no more." But the Governor, it seems, still thought that he would apply to the Magistrates. That is his apology : and, let it pass for an apology. I understand that the Governor is a very respectable man, and wishes to perform his duty : but, he is placed in circumstances, in which any man might be embarrassed and overawed. Besides, he was very unpopular at that time : and the cause of his unpopularity is remarkable. A planter, named Best, had, a short time previously, flogged a negro to death. He absconded, and a reward was offered for his apprehension. Another planter, seeing a woman plucking a few handfulls of guinea-grass, fired at her. The ball lodged in her back ; and she died. He left the island, and a reward was offered for his apprehension. A white man was found dead in a wood. He was a man of dissolute and drunken habits ; and the Governor, thinking he had fallen a victim to his own intemperance, offered no reward for the apprehension of the murderers ; upon the very intelligible ground, that he did not think a murder had been com-

mitted. This gave great offence. It was said, "Here is notorious partiality—a slave or two are unfortunately killed, and a reward is offered; but now one of our own body, a white man, is found dead, and no reward is offered for the perpetrators of his death"—the perpetrator being, in all probability, the rum-bottle. The Governor was unpopular—he could do nothing; at least, he thought so. He treated Mr. Shrewsbury very kindly; said, "I am extremely sorry for you—I wish you well—I have been abused more than any man in the colony—and the arm of protection extended to you would be represented as an arbitrary act," says the Governor—"an act of tyranny," says Mr. Shrewsbury. And that is the most material difference between them.

Mr. Shrewsbury did not apply to the Magistrates. And, as this is the only occasion in which there is any pretext for charging him, even with an error of judgment, I shall inquire, whether he ought to have applied to the Magistrates. To which of them should he have gone? To Mr. Haynes, who said he would lead the way, and pull down the Chapel at noon-day? To Mr. Moore, who summoned him before the Court, where to appear was to perish? To the Magistrate, at whose shop the bottles were prepared? To Mr. Newsome, the lawyer, or to

Mr. Walton, jun., of whom I will say something presently? To address himself to these, was to address himself to the bitterest of his enemies. And, if it be pretended that, had he gone to them, he would have received protection, I answer distinctly, that it is clear he would not, for this reason—they afterwards, by their own confession, knew that the mob had assembled, were pulling down the Chapel, and, for aught they knew, murdering the preacher; and their own account of their conduct is, that they went home and went to bed. Now, will it be believed, that those Magistrates, who did not interfere when the rioters were in action, would have interfered, from the mere rumour of a riot, coming from so suspicious and obnoxious a quarter as Mr. Shrewsbury?

But, Mr. Shrewsbury *did* seek council and assistance: and, he sought it in a remarkable quarter. This fierce sectarian, plotting the destruction of the Church, and living in bitter enmity with its professors, went to a clergyman, whose kindness then displayed to a poor friendless Missionary, hunted for his life by an infuriated mob, I will now return—by concealing his name; knowing, that if I were to mention his name with approbation, the fate of Mr. Austin of Demerara would await him. There

is in the transaction at Barbadoes, as there was also in that of Demerara, that which, of all things, I hate the most—a rank, fierce, furious spirit of religious bigotry, dominant in the land, and pursuing its victims, the one to death, and the other to exile. But, there is that also which does honour to human nature, and casts a glory round that Church to which I belong, and which I prefer to all others; namely, that these poor victims—Dissenters, Missionaries, Methodists, though they were—found their best friends and their most faithful advisers, in the ranks of our Clergy. Mr. Austin, for the most noble act which has been done in our days, is a ruined and a banished man: and, I spare the name of the other, in order to spare him—the honours, indeed, but—the sufferings of martyrdom.

The Clergyman advised Mr. Shrewsbury to apply to the Council—(observe, he did not recommend an application to the Magistrates; he knew them)—and, in the interim, he recommended, that the chapel should be closed. Mr. Shrewsbury, in both particulars, followed his advice; though somewhat contrary to his own judgment. He was rather disposed to brave the storm. He determined to apply to the Council, which was to meet in the ensuing week; and, the next Sunday, his Chapel was closed,

and he, with as many of his congregation as he could collect, attended the established Church.

Had matters stopped here, it would have furnished the most perfect sample of intolerance, save the sister case in Demerara, which has been exhibited for many a day, in any part of the British dominions. A riot, Sunday, October the 5th. A disturbance, Wednesday the 8th. A storm, within and without, Friday, the 10th. A very serious riot, Sunday the 12th. A public and most alarming commotion, Wednesday the 15th. And, by Sunday, the 19th, the chapel closed, the preacher fled, his congregation dispersed, or collected within the walls of the church. No interference on the part of the military—no protection from the Magistrates—no succour from the Governor—no symptom that there was such a thing as law in Barbadoes ! Had it stopped there, it would have deserved, indeed, the name only of a riot—but, a riot of the worst spirit ; and, considering *where* it was ; in the heart of a negro population—*when* it was ; at the moment when the minds of the negroes were agitated by rumours of conceded liberty, a riot of the most dangerous kind.

But, subsequent events cast all these transgressions into the shade. Hereafter it assumed a new form, and exhibited a contempt of law,

a defiance of authority, which changes the name and the character of the transaction. On Friday, the 17th, a Secret Committee had met, and issued a Circular, which, for distinction's sake, I will call "Proclamation the First." It states, that the gentry and inhabitants of Barbadoes had determined to meet, on the following Sunday, for the purpose of pulling down the Methodist Chapel; and it invites the person to whom it was addressed to appear in his place, properly provided. The proclamation had its effect. They met. And I must now tell you, of whom they consisted. Not a negro amongst them—one mulatto, and only one. And, in order to shew the feelings of the coloured population, on whom the safety of the Colony, in a great measure, rests, and to offend whom is to risk the safety of the island, it is only necessary to state, that though they behaved with the most perfect propriety, have never repelled force by force, or outrage by outrage; yet, so sensibly have they felt this insult, that no one of them has held any intercourse, or exchanged a single syllable, with that man of their number, who joined the rioters. It consisted of whites, and was headed by persons of influence.

And now, as to their numbers. "It consisted," says the Governor, "of an immense concourse

of persons." It consisted, says an eye-witness, a planter, an enemy of Mr. Shrewsbury, of "a thousand head-strong fools." Whether they were or were not head-strong fools, I leave the House to judge; but, I doubt whether they amounted to a thousand. Mr. Shrewsbury, with that indisposition to exaggerate, which has marked all his communications with me, says, that he thinks that the numbers have been exaggerated—that they did not exceed four or five hundred; part of whom came provided with implements to pull down the Chapel, and part armed with swords to resist the military. That they were thus armed, I state; first, on the authority of Mr. Shrewsbury; but, secondly, on the better authority of the planter I have alluded to; who says, "I am just returned from witnessing the effects of an infuriated mob of head-strong fools, so desperate, that they had determined to resist the military." And the Governor puts it out of all question, by saying, "the Chapel was pulled down by an immense concourse of persons, many of whom were armed." They broke open the windows and doors of the Chapel, destroyed the benches, pews, and pulpit, and tore and trod under foot, a large collection of bibles and tracts, intended for the use of the negroes and the school. They

then stormed the dwelling-house, destroyed every article of furniture, chopped in pieces the tables and the chairs, unroofed the house, and, making a flag of his linen, which they had collected, waived it in the air three times, gave three cheers, and, it being now twelve o'clock at night, and they having been occupied laboriously for five hours, they adjourned until seven o'clock the next evening. At that time they met, according to appointment, in the same number, with the same spirit, with the same discipline, and completed the demolition of the Chapel. "High-handed Work," says the Editor of a Colonial paper—"High-handed Work" he heads his article—"the Methodist Chapel in Bridge-town has shared the fate of the temple of Jerusalem—not one stone is left upon another." The victory being thus obtained, nothing remained but to announce it in due form. And, accordingly, announced it was the next day, in these terms:—

"Great and signal Triumph over Methodism;
and total Destruction of the Chapel!!!

"*Bridgetown, Tuesday, October 21, 1823.*

"The inhabitants of this island are respectfully informed, that, in consequence of the unmerited and unprovoked attacks which have been repeatedly made upon the community by

the Methodist Missionaries (otherwise known as agents to the villanous African Society), a party of respectable Gentlemen formed the resolution of closing the Methodist concern altogether: with this view they commenced their labours on Sunday evening; and they have the greatest satisfaction in announcing, that by twelve o'clock last night they effected the total destruction of the Chapel. To this information they have to add, that the Missionary made his escape yesterday afternoon, in a small vessel, for St. Vincent; thereby avoiding that expression of the public feeling towards him, personally, which he had so richly deserved. It is to be hoped, that, as this information will be circulated throughout the different islands and colonies, all persons who consider themselves true lovers of religion will follow the laudable example of the Barbadians, in putting an end to Methodism and Methodist Chapels throughout the West-Indies."

The next day, the Governor issued his Proclamation, offering a reward for the detection of the rioters; but, the intreating, almost-supplicating language, in which it is couched, clearly proves that the mob were masters. The real tenour of it is this: "Pray, gentlemen, recollect yourselves. If you are pleased thus to pull down the houses and chapels of the teachers of

the negroes, who can tell but that the negroes may follow the example, and pull down your houses?" Having thus, as he hoped, seduced the more respectable into a belief, that, upon the whole, it were as well, for the sake of example, not to pull down innocent men's houses, he ventures to offer a reward for the apprehension of the offenders, and ends in the usual form, "God save the King!"

The next day, the rioters put forth a counter-proclamation, mimicking that of the Governor, beginning "Whereas," &c. and ending "God save the King and the People." But, if they mimicked the form, they by no means attempted to imitate the very humble strain, in which the Governor's was couched. Bold defiance of the law—vengeance, desperate retaliation against any who might dare to inform—a boast, that they had done the deed, and would do it again, if opportunity occurred—a boast, that perjury would protect them, is the bold tenour of Proclamation the Third. It runs thus:—

"Bridgetown, Barbadoes, October 23, 1823.

"Whereas a Proclamation having appeared, &c. &c., public notice is hereby given to such person or persons who may feel inclined, either from pecuniary temptation or vindictive feeling, that should they attempt to come forward to

injure, in any shape, any individual, they shall receive that punishment which their crime will justly deserve." [That is, obey the laws, assist the Governor in this emergency, act the part of a good citizen, and you shall receive the punishment due to that crime.] "They are to understand, that to impeach is not to convict, and that the reward offered will only be given upon conviction; which cannot be effected whilst the people are firm to themselves:" [that is, "Impeach you may, convict you cannot; for we shall be the jury-men, and firm to each other—bring the rioter to trial if you please—make his guilt as clear as the sun at noon-day—an association stronger than the laws, which laughs at the obligation of an oath, and converts the Jury-box into the worst engine of political oppression, will screen the offender. He shall escape, but you shall stand in his place—the Governor tells you, that you shall receive a reward of £100; but, we tell you, that you shall die the death which your crimes have merited."]. "And whereas, it may appear to those persons who are unacquainted with the circumstances which occasioned the said Proclamation, that the demolition of the Chapel was effected by the rabble of this community, in order to create anarchy, riot, and insubordination; to trample

upon the laws of the country, and to subvert good order:—It is considered an imperative duty to repel the charge, and to state; firstly, that the majority of the persons assembled were of the first respectability, and were supported by the concurrence of nine-tenths of the community:—secondly, that their motives were patriotic and loyal, namely, to eradicate from this soil the germ of Methodism, which was spreading its baneful influence over a certain class, and which ultimately would have injured both Church and State. With this view, the chapel was demolished, and the villanous preacher, who headed it and belied us, was compelled, by a speedy flight, to remove himself from the island. With a fixed determination, therefore, to put an end to Methodism in this island, all Methodist preachers are warned not to approach our shores; as, if they do, it will be at their own peril. ‘God save the King and the People.’”

The moment I read this Proclamation, I said, “This is of Irish extraction: it is Captain Rock gone over to the West-Indies; it is his language, and his mode of persuasion.” But, I did not dream, that the resemblance which I discovered was designed. It was, however: for the next Proclamation came out with the sig-

nature of "Captain Rock." When the Governor saw this Proclamation, he asked the Council what he should do? and they answered, "Nothing at all"—and, nothing has been done.

I now follow Mr. Shrewsbury. He had retired, on the Wednesday, to the house of a relative. On the Sunday evening, he received information, that the mob declared, that as soon as they had finished the Chapel they would proceed to the house of his relation, search it, and; if they found him, hang him. Having no reason to doubt that they would be as good as their word, he retired to a house at a short distance from the town, and nearer the sea. His wife, who was not in a condition to move, was concealed in the hut of a negro. In the middle of the night, some horsemen galloped up to the house which he had left, crying out, "Down with the Methodists! down with all the Methodists!" but, no attack was made.

The next morning, Mr. Shrewsbury received communications from many of his friends; all saying, "leave the island without a moment's delay: no man's life was ever in greater danger: the rioters are in search of you; and if they catch you, will undoubtedly put you to death." Upon this intelligence, taking his wife with him, little as she was in a condition to move, he em-

barked on board a small vessel, and sailed for St. Vincent's. In the passage, his wife was taken ill ; and was delivered shortly after her arrival at St. Vincent's.

And this brings me to a part of the conduct of Mr. Shrewsbury, which I cannot mention with sufficient admiration ; especially as contrasted with that of the rioters. One might suppose that, by this time, their rage was cooled. The chapel was down—the preacher fled—and they had destroyed every shilling of the man's property. One might have thought, that they would have felt, if not remorse, at least weariness—satiety—that amnesty which follows gratified revenge. They did not. They published their manifesto, glorying in what they had done, regretting only that he had escaped with his life, and vowing vengeance against Methodists and Methodism. It would have been but natural, I say, if their wrath had, by this time, evaporated ; and natural, also, if Mr. Shrewsbury's passions had been roused and exasperated, by the treatment he had received. A sense of his wrongs and of his innocence—the loss of every shilling of his property—the destruction of his chapel—the extermination of his Mission—I say, it would have been but human nature, if these bitter recollections, rushing upon his

mind, at the moment of his leaving, had driven him, as oppression driveth a wise man mad, so far to forget himself, as to pour forth execrations upon the head of his tormentors. He did write a letter: and, such a letter!—not an angry word in it—not a complaint—not an unmanly lamentation—not an attempt to stir up the passions of the negroes. He just glances at his sudden departure, and then leaves that irritating topic. He expostulates with the negroes. Admonishes them to avenge his sufferings? No: but to peace, tranquillity, obedience, and cheerful submission. This is part of the letter:

“ Be patient towards all men. Never speak disrespectfully of any in authority, nor revilingly of any one who injures you. Whatever you are called to suffer, I beseech you to take it patiently. In general, it will be best for you to be wholly silent. From the affection you bear towards me, you will, perhaps, find it difficult to refrain when you hear me spoken against: but your wisest plan will be to hold your peace, for you would be in great danger of speaking with undue warmth, were you to undertake to defend my character. You that are slaves will, I hope, be exceedingly careful ‘to adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things.’ Let no slave who is a Methodist be dishonest, or lazy, or impertinent either in speech or behaviour.”

but let every one be sober, honest, industrious, and useful to his owner, even as we have taught you both in public and in private, from day to day. And as to political matters, whether ye be bond or free, never meddle with them; but mind higher and better things, the things relating to God and eternity. Never speak slightly of the regular Clergy. In this respect, imitate the example I set you while I dwelt among you."

On Mr. Shrewsbury's arrival at St. Vincent, he applied to the Governor, who received him very kindly, but told him, that he considered him as coming under circumstances of suspicion, and that he must suspend him from the exercise of his clerical duties for the present. In consequence, Mr. Rayner, another Missionary, went to Barbadoes, in order to collect testimonials. And this gave a new opportunity for exhibiting the spirit which prevails. He was not permitted to land. He learnt, at one time, that it was proposed to burn the vessel; at another, that boats were to be manned from the shore, to drag him from the vessel, and put him to death. And Mr. Walton, jun. whom I mentioned before, then a magistrate, but not now a magistrate;—for he has met with an unfortunate accident: he was one night caught in com-

pany with Mr. Newsome, the lawyer, in the act of breaking the windows of a hearer of the Methodists, and, in consequence, ceased to be a magistrate. Mr. Walton came on board the vessel, and gave them a second edition of the proclamation. He warned Mr. Rayner to be gone in four-and-twenty hours, or he must take the consequences. So alarmed was the Captain, that he removed from Carlile Bay, where he had anchored under the guns of a ship of war, and the officers of the vessel went on shore. They waited upon those persons of respectability, who had known most of Mr. Shrewsbury; but, such was the terror that prevailed, that many of them refused to give testimonials, saying, their life would be in danger. Others did give some; but, in fear and trembling, and under a pledge of the concealment of the names. I have these testimonials in my hand, nine in number; and they are exactly what one would have expected. "I solemnly declare," says the first, "that I never heard Mr. Shrewsbury utter one word, tending to insubordination." "As to the negroes," says the second, "he was always particular in teaching them their duty to their masters, as part of their duty to God." And they all run in the same strain. With these testimonials Mr. Rayner returned to St. Vincent, and de-

livered them to the Governor. So satisfied was he with them, that within an hour Mr. Shrewsbury received a letter from him, stating, that he was at liberty to preach in any part of his government : and he preached accordingly the next day. Mr. Shrewsbury remained for some time in that island, and is now in England. And, if any thing were wanted to complete the tenor of his character, it is the way in which he speaks of the treatment he has received. He never speaks of the transactions, without introducing every imaginable circumstance of palliation ; nor of the actors, except in terms of undissembled charity.

At Barbadoes the ferment continued. They had then time to refer to the paragraph in their second proclamation : “ It is hoped, that as this information will be circulated throughout the different islands and colonies, all persons who consider themselves true lovers of religion will follow the laudable example of the Barbadians, in putting an end to Methodism, and Methodist Chapels, throughout the West-Indies.” And, accordingly, they sent a deputation, consisting of from eight to ten persons, to the neighbouring Islands, in order to induce them to follow the laudable example of Barbadoes, and pull down the chapels. This commission landed at

Tobago, stated their object, and the Governor ordered them to be gone in an hour. They landed at Trinidad, the Governor ordered them off in five minutes. And, at Grenada, they met with a still more inhospitable reception. The Governor sent a body of soldiers to take them into custody, if they landed. They returned, therefore, to Barbadoes, from a very unsuccessful embassy.

In that island things remained very much in the same state. The mob had gained an absolute victory. No Methodist was allowed to preach : no Missionary was permitted to land : and no man was brought to trial for the demolition of the chapel. Month after month elapsed. And now, at all events, you will anticipate, that passion had cooled, and that reason and common sense resumed their sway. It was not so, however. They determined to celebrate the anniversary of the demolition of the chapel, by a similar outrage. They found out, that a respectable coloured woman was a Methodist, and proposed to pull down her house. Now, there is something so incredible in this, that I must resort to my authority. You will find it in the Governor's despatch, dated December 2, 1824.

"It was intended and proclaimed most publicly to meet in honour of the anniversary of

the destruction of the Methodist Chapel, and to pull down a house belonging to a coloured Methodist woman, who held meetings in her house; in consequence of which, I ordered the whole of the military, town-militia, and life-guards, to be prepared and under arms on the evening of the day so proclaimed, and the magistrates to assemble near the spot before dark."

It was "proclaimed most publicly:" and you will like to hear the terms of the proclamation. It beats all the others. It is signed "Rock." It states, that the actors in the former scene have formed themselves into "a Committee of Public Safety;" that they have taken the name of "the Worthy." It invites the Worthy to meet "in love and harmony," on the 19th of October, and after dinner to proceed to pull down a house, "where Methodism began again to rear its hideous head." The Worthy are enjoined to come armed, that in case "any of the pest should resist, they might be sent to sleep with their forefathers." They are animated to their enterprise by the memory of the former 19th of October, "a day more dear to true Barbadians than Trafalgar to Britons." The whole concludes with a solemn oath to extirpate Methodism from the Island "by fire and sword. So help us our God!" (Signed) "Rock."

The Governor, however, was upon the alert. He ordered out the military; and the 19th of October passed ingloriously. But, let no one imagine, that the Governor has resumed his authority, or that the spirit of persecution is extinct, or even asleep. It is as watchful as ever. In April last, the Missionary Society sent some of their number to Barbadoes to rebuild the chapel, with the concurrence of Lord Bathurst, and with the concurrence of the Honourable Secretary, as appears in these Papers. I have seen nothing but the Barbadoes newspapers: but, from them I learn, that they were not permitted to land. The mob again assumed the functions of the Governor, and warned them from the shore, under the penalty of death. Lord Bathurst is reviled, in the most unqualified terms. His attempt to afford protection to the Methodists is described as the most "unlooked-for, uncalled-for, absurd, and dangerous measure, ever contemplated by a British minister;" and the Right Honourable Gentleman, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, is not spared. It is said, "the genius of Puritanism has spread its malign influence over the whole Cabinet." I make light of all this. I rate it all as nonsense and idle gossip. But, there is a fact stated, to which I do attach importance.

It is stated, that the House of Assembly, who, be it remembered, have never stirred a step to bring the rioters to justice, have moved at last; and ordered a prosecution against a Methodist woman, who has devoted herself, most virtuously, to the instruction of the negroes, for the crime of holding religious meetings. Here is the paragraph—

“The House of Assembly have ordered a prosecution to be instituted against a mulatto woman, for holding public meetings of this description; whilst His Excellency the Governor, in compliance with Earl Bathurst’s instructions, has issued a second Circular to the Magistrates, calling upon them to afford every protection in their power, even aided by the military, to the Reverend Vagabonds above alluded to, which to us has a very portentous meaning, and which may God in his infinite mercy avert!”

Now, can any thing exceed the effrontery of all this? Was there ever such a train and cluster of enormities? Look at it in one view—it is religious intolerance, at its highest point of phrenzy; fire and faggot persecution. Look at it in another aspect—it is unblushing contempt of authority, defiance of law, a triumph not merely over Methodism—(that many gentlemen would approve)—but a triumph over the Gover-

nor there, over the Parliament here, and over the feeling of the people of England. Look at the tenor of their proceedings. First, it was but a riot, an ebullition of popular feeling; and, had it subsided then, and had proper atonement been made, it might not have deserved the attention of Parliament. But, it wants the poor apology of a temporary excitement. It has raged too long. The same flame which burst forth in 1823, was raging as furiously as ever, at the moment the last despatches left the island. It is a series of riots—a continuity of outrages—a reign which has lasted long, and, if the islanders are to be believed, which shall last for ever, of the most furious and deadly passions. It was but a riot—it has mounted into an insurrection. I defy any lawyer to deny, that overt acts of rebellion have been committed. The people are invited to attend a meeting to pull down a chapel. They meet, and pull down the chapel—armed to resist the military, and to send any of the “pest” who may interfere “to sleep with their forefathers.” Proclamation after proclamation is issued, full of defiance to legitimate authority—breathing the spirit of revolt, or rather of triumphant and predominant rebellion. Emissaries are sent

forth ; ambassadors of persecution, to stir up the embers of civil commotion and religious discord in the neighbouring islands. A Committee of Public Safety, on the French plan, is appointed. Captain Rock, on the Irish model, signs the Manifesto. Unoffending men, bearing the passport and safe conduct of His Majesty's Chief Secretary of State for the Colonies, are not permitted to land in them. And, so little of penitence is there, that the day of Mr. Shrewsbury's sufferings is dedicated to triumph, as a day " more dear to true Barbadians, than Trafalgar to Britons." These tumults, these concerted meetings of armed men, to do a lawless act—which act they do—these proclamations, embassies, committees of public safety; and, above all, this act of outlawry, putting the King's liege subjects out of the King's peace—I want to know what all these amount to. And I want to know this from the Right Honourable Gentlemen opposite. I beg to ask them—Do they amount to contumacy? Ask any body else—One man will tell you, they amount to stark-staring rebellion. Another, desirous to palliate to the uttermost, will say, that they are very little more than the most daring riot and mutiny that ever was heard of. But, will any man say, they are not contumacy?

Now, the Right Honourable Gentleman, the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, once told us, that if he experienced resistance from the West-Indies, partaking of the nature of contumacy, he would come down to Parliament for counsel and assistance. And, is not this contumacy with a vengeance? Unbridled, unveiled contumacy? Contumacy pushed to its extremest point? Let us look what it is called by the Authorities in the Island. The Council, planters themselves, under the influence of planters, and in awe of the mob, call it "a disgraceful outrage." Lord Bathurst, who always answers the exasperated language of the Colonists in the mildest and most gentleman-like terms, calls it "a daring and scandalous violation of law." The Governor, helpless as he is, almost shorn of his authority, calls it, in his despatch, "an outrageous violation of law and order, defeating the ends of civil association," says the Governor—rendering the laws "a scourge to the weak," says the Governor—pregnant with "the very worst consequences, and the most evil example," in a society of Slaves, and "such as, if it be suffered to pass unpunished"—(this is his language, not mine)—"will render every man unsafe, in person and in property, delivered over to the mercy

of a mob." And this he says, upon the first outrage; which has been aggravated, a hundred fold, by what has since occurred;

Now, the question which I wish to propound is—Shall it pass unnoticed and uncondemned?—unpunished, I do not say. I ask no punishment. I wish every blessing to the planters—and more especially, the blessing of a tolerant and peaceable spirit. I ask only this—First, that law should be re-established in Barbadoes, after a long interregnum: Secondly, that those who pulled down the Chapel should build it up again: and, Lastly, that law and justice, protection and toleration, should be secured to all His Majesty's unoffending subjects, in all parts of his dominions.

Thus ends my narrative: and I hope I have kept my promise of chronicling the events, in the order in which they took place. But, I would now throw myself on the indulgence of the House; as there are two observations, or rather two comparisons, which I would fain make. I would compare the case of Smith, the Missionary, in Demerara, with the case of the Magistrates of Barbadoes. I wish to put, side by side, the crime of Smith and his punishment, and the crime of the Magistrates of Barbadoes and their punishment. Mr. Smith knew that a

disturbance was approaching, half an hour, as some witnesses say ; a quarter of an hour, as others depose—before the insurrection began. That is his crime. The Magistrates of Barbadoes were summoned before the Council, and asked, “Did you know that a riotous assembly had collected at the Wesleyan Chapel, for the purpose of pulling down that building, and that they were actually engaged in destroying it?” “I did”—is the answer of every magistrate who was in town at the time. So far, then, they stand in a parity of guilt.

Mr. Smith did something. He remonstrated with the rioters, till his remonstrances were checked by a presented blunderbuss ; but still he saved the life of Hamilton, the manager. “Did you,” the Magistrates are asked, “make any effort to disperse the meeting, and prevent the destruction of the Chapel ? Did you, Mr. Gill ?” “I used no effort.”—“Did you, Mr. Wickham ?” “I used no effort.”—“Did you, Mr. Grant ?” “I used no effort on either of those nights.”—“Did you, Mr. Walton ?” “I used no efforts on either of those nights.”—“Did you, Mr. Waith ?” “I made no effort, aware that it was useless.” Here, then, Mr. Smith has the advantage of the Magistrates. He, did something ; they, nothing.

Mr. Smith made no communication to the Governor—the time and the distance rendering it physically impossible. The Magistrates are asked, “Did you make any communication to the Governor on the subject?” “I made no communication to him,” is the answer of them all.

The poor, reviled Missionary, holding no commission, charged with no responsibility, at ten miles distance from the Governor and the Military, because he did not communicate with the rapidity of a telegraph, is sentenced to be hanged by the neck, until he be dead.—And, the Magistrates, the responsible authorities of the town, in the neighbourhood of the Barracks and the Governor, confessing that they knew every thing, did nothing, communicated nothing—are sentenced to this punishment—“the Council declared their opinion, that the conduct of the Magistrates was reprehensible, with the exception of Mr. Moore and Mr. Waith, who lived in the country.”—“The Governor then inquired, what the Privy Council thought should be done on the occasion, when the Board advised, that his Excellency’s displeasure should be expressed to those who had neglected their duty; which his Excellency desired the Clerk to do.” And, even this egregious sentence,

as far as appears from these papers, was never carried into effect.

So that, for the same crime, one man is sentenced to death; and another to a ridiculous reprimand, from the mouth of the Governor's Clerk. A hundred and ninety-three gentlemen voted last session, that Mr. Smith, sentenced to death, and hurried to an untimely grave, was not punished too severely. Every one of them votes with me to-night, in common consistency. For, to them, of all men, must it appear most monstrous, that the same crime committed by magistrates, should be avenged by a sentence of displeasure.

But, there is another comparison infinitely more revolting to my mind, and which I cannot think of without horror and poignant commiseration, and without sickening at the idea of West-India justice. The rioters were white men, and not the hair of the head of one of them has been touched. Had men with black skins committed such, one-half, one hundredth-part of such, enormities—had they attended one lawless meeting—had they fired one house—had they sent forth one emissary—had they issued one proclamation of defiance—had they armed to resist the military—or had a negro whispered—(I speak not of an imaginary, but of

an actual case, detailed in the papers lately laid before the House)—had a negro whispered in the secret ear of his son, one sentence of dissatisfaction with his condition, or one natural sigh for liberty, what a massacre, what lashings, what gibbeting, would have followed!—how would the Mac Turks have rioted in the blood of the slaves!—how would the halberds have streamed with the blood of men sentenced, “for mercy’s sake,” as it was impudently called, to a thousand lashes, which were inflicted!—But, being white men, and not blacks; civilized men, and not savages—“gentlemen,” forsooth, “of respectability,” which aggravates their guilt a thousand fold—their riot is patriotic—their proclamation is loyal: because they are “true lovers of religion,” they pull down a chapel, and prosecute their neighbour, out of love and harmony! The black insurgents have quivered under the halberds, and are rotting on the gibbets of Demerara—the white insurgents hold the King’s commission; administer the laws; are the senators and magistrates of Barbadoes! “Equal-handed Justice” is the boast and glory of the British Constitution.

My motion is temperate, perhaps to a fault. I ask no punishment on any man. I state a fact: and, in order to prevent misconception,

I state, in the words of Lord Bathurst, that a daring and scandalous violation of law has been committed : next, I state, what I believe to be a fact,—and shall continue so to believe, until I am undeceived by a vote of this House ; namely, that we view that outrage with amazement and detestation : next, I say, that we will assist His Majesty, in enforcing the rebuilding of the Chapel, at the expense of those who pulled it down : and, finally, I say, that, warned by past events, we will now take especial care, that there shall be law, justice, liberty of conscience, for all His Majesty's subjects in that part of His Majesty's dominions.—The Honourable Member then moved,

“ That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, representing to His Majesty that this House, having taken into their most serious consideration the Papers laid before them relating to the demolition of the Methodist Chapel in Barbadoes, and the expulsion of Mr. Shrewsbury, a licensed teacher of religion, deem it their duty to declare, that they view with the utmost amazement and detestation that scandalous and daring violation of law ; and to beseech His Majesty to take such steps as shall secure the rebuilding of the Chapel at the expense of the colony of Barbadoes ; and also, to

assure His Majesty, that this House will afford him every assistance which may be required, in order to prevent the recurrence of such outrages, and in order to secure ample protection, and religious toleration, to all His Majesty's subjects in that part of His Dominions."

Mr. WILMOT HORTON said :—He should not attempt to follow the Honourable Member into the details of the complaint which he had just submitted to the House, but should endeavour to confine himself to such a statement as would put the House in possession of the knowledge of the real condition of the island to which the motion of the Honourable Member referred, at the time when the facts in question had occurred, in order that the House might be enabled to form a correct judgment of the original causes which had led to so unfortunate a result. In fulfilment of this duty, however, he should endeavour to offer such observations as might be calculated to conciliate angry feelings on either side, and to prevent the recurrence of such evils for the future, rather than attempt to follow, step by step, the minute and substantially-accurate statement of facts, which the Honourable Member had just made.

No Gentleman could feel less inclined than

he was, to justify so gross an outrage as the destruction of the Methodist Chapel at Barbadoes. In fact, a reference to the papers which had already been laid before Parliament would sufficiently prove the sense which had been entertained by the Noble Lord at the head of the Colonial Department, of the nature of that outrage. At the same time, he felt how unfortunate it would be, if any thing occurred of a nature to rekindle feelings of animosity, and place at issue with each other the Missionaries of the Wesleyan Society and certain Proprietors in the West-Indies; between whom so much misunderstanding had already prevailed.

In the main, he agreed with what had fallen from the Honourable Member; but, he must object to the introduction of the case of Mr. Smith, the Missionary of Demerara. The Honourable Member had endeavoured to establish an analogy between the case of Mr. Smith, which was brought before the House last session, and the present case of the Magistrates of Barbadoes; but, he thought that it was very unsatisfactory in principle, if not more objectionable, to attempt to establish such analogy; and he thought that the Honourable Gentleman had failed in doing so on the present occasion. It was to be remembered, that the subject of

Slavery generally, never could be approached, without adverting to the fact, that it was a state, however objectionable in itself, which had received, from time to time, in the most unequivocal manner, the sanction and support of this country. It was mixed up, in the minds of the West-India Planters, with the question of property; and, if it could be shewn, that the irritation, distrust, and dislike, which had been entertained in the minds of the Planters at Barbadoes against Mr. Shrewsbury and the Wesleyan Missionaries, arose from an apprehension which they entertained for the security of their property, as involved in the possession of Slaves, some apology would be furnished by that consideration. If they considered that the doctrines held by these Missionaries were dangerous to their interests, as being subversive of subordination among the Slaves, inasmuch as they inculcated the doctrine that Slavery was incompatible with Christianity, that again would make the present case one which ought to be considered on its own peculiar grounds, and not in analogy with that of Mr. Smith, the Missionary of Demerara.—Now, whether Mr. Shrewsbury or the Missionaries ever inculcated these doctrines, or, if they did, whether they acted under a sense of duty in doing so, was a ques-

tion upon which he would not pause to make any observations. He would only say, that the state of Slavery being a recognized state, and certain rights of property being mixed up with that state, it would have been wise on the part of the Missionaries, with reference to late discussions which had taken place in Parliament on the subject of that state, to have conciliated the Planters, by endeavouring to remove from their minds any doubts or apprehensions, that they meant, in any degree, to weaken the spirit of obedience in the Slave.

Now, with respect to Mr. Shrewsbury himself, he did not mean, for one moment, to raise any argument against the respectability of that individual. Indeed, he entertained no doubt on the subject. The testimonials to which the Honourable Member had referred came from persons of high character, and were, on that account, entitled to every consideration and all possible weight. At the same time, it was beyond a doubt, that that Missionary, perhaps unintentionally, had given offence to the great bulk of the white population of Barbadoes, who considered themselves likely to be prejudiced by his conduct. For, only one month after that individual arrived in the island, he had written home a letter to the Wesleyan Missionary

Society, containing some severe strictures on the state of Religious Instruction, as then existing there. These strictures containing, or being supposed to contain, harsh reflections on the white inhabitants in general, did excite against Mr. Shrewsbury strong feelings of disapprobation in Barbadoes. Mr. Shrewsbury had written to the Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, on the 28th of March 1820, in the following words: "If we now pause, and take a calm review of the moral condition of this populous Colony, the sight will be painful and affecting in the extreme. Surely, the fear of God is hardly to be seen in this place." And, although, in a subsequent part of that letter, he directed his observations towards the free black and the Slave population, still, a general censure on the whole was considered to have been made.

And here he wished it to be understood distinctly, that he had no complaint to make against the Wesleyan Missionaries in the West-Indies. On the contrary, speaking generally, from all that he had heard, he was disposed to speak favourably of their conduct and of their usefulness. But he might, he hoped, without giving any offence, recommend the greatest caution to those persons, in the existing state

of feeling in the Colonies.—It appeared, too, that Mr. Shrewsbury, instead of disarming the prejudices which prevailed, had taken steps, which were rather calculated to aggravate them. With the view, as he said, of explaining the real state of the case to the public, he had himself laid a copy of the letter in question upon the table of the public Commercial Room,—a step, which many persons in the Colony considered as not done in the spirit of self-justification, but in that of defiance, and with a view to shew how little he valued his opponents;—especially as he did this at the time when the alarms of the people of Barbadoes were excited, not only by the discussions that had taken place both in and out of Parliament, but by the intelligence lately received of the formidable insurrection in Demerara,—to the supposed origin and causes of which, he should not now advert. Whatever might have been Mr. Shrewsbury's motive in this respect, it was sufficient to say, that his conduct had given rise to feelings, which led to the circumstances which the House was now called on to discuss.

With regard to the Chapel which had been destroyed, he could inform the House, that at the period of Mr. Shrewsbury's arrival in Barba-

does, in February 1820, so far from its appearing, that there was any general indisposition towards himself or his Mission,—on the contrary, every sort of assistance and support was given him :—and, in proof of this assertion, he could state, that one-third of the expense of building this Chapel which had lately been destroyed, was raised by voluntary subscriptions. Nothing could more clearly establish the fact, that this irritation, on the part of the people of Barbadoes, did not arise from original ill-will towards the Wesleyan Missionaries, but from particular circumstances, which had characterized the Mission of this individual.

The Honourable Gentleman then adverted to the argument of the Honourable Member opposite, who had observed on the continuance of these feelings in Barbadoes up to a late period. To that he would reply,—and he did so with considerable regret,—that circumstances certainly had occurred, which had a tendency to keep alive and continue, that particular state of suspicion and jealousy, which existed in the minds of the white Inhabitants of Barbadoes, and to which he had alluded ; namely, a jealousy of the supposed tendency of the Wesleyan doctrines to diminish the obedience of the Slave. It appeared, that in last September, certain

Resolutions were passed at a meeting of Wesleyan Missionaries in Kingston, Jamaica, the first of which was expressed in these words : " That they entertain a decided belief, that Christianity does not interfere with the civil condition of Slaves, as slavery is established and regulated by the laws of the British West-Indies."—The Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society at home thought it necessary, explicitly and distinctly to protest against the doctrine contained in that Resolution; and they declared, that they held it to be " the duty of every Christian Government, to bring the state of Slavery to an end, as soon as it can be done, prudently, safely, and with a just consideration of the interests of all parties concerned :"—and, thus far, they go little beyond the Resolutions of the House of Commons. They then add, that " the degradation of men merely on account of their colour, and the holding of human beings in interminable bondage, are wholly inconsistent with Christianity." Now, of whatever qualification this opinion might be susceptible, to preach to the Slave, that Christianity is his first duty, and to tell him, at the same time, that his state of Slavery is wholly inconsistent with Christianity, was to inculcate doctrines, which would naturally appear dan-

gerous to those who felt, that their property, the property of their families, and their very existence, were necessarily involved in the possession of Slaves.

The Honourable Member had alluded to certain prosecutions, which, it was said, were about to be instituted by the Law Authorities of the Colony. He could only say, that no such prosecutions would take place, without a previous consultation with the Government at home.

The Honourable Member had expressed little or no censure on the conduct of the Governor of Barbadoes, who, he felt assured that the House would consider, had done every thing in his power. In referring Mr. Shrewsbury to the Magistrates for protection, he had felt, that he was only giving that importance to the execution of the law which it was his duty to give. If Mr. Shrewsbury had applied to the Magistrates, and they had refused to act, he might then have immediately returned to the Governor, who would have found himself placed under circumstances, in which he could have had no hesitation in interfering personally. But, the impression which existed in Mr. Shrewsbury's mind, that he would not receive assistance from the Magistrates, was pleaded as an excuse for not having made the application. In that exercise of his

discretion, he considered Mr. Shrewsbury to have been entirely in the wrong; and that he was so far responsible for the circumstances which had succeeded.

He would mention another cause of the continued irritation which had existed in Barbadoes. In the Report of the Committee of the Wesleyan Missionary Society to December 1824, page 105, were the following remarks, with reference to the destruction of the chapel : “ The whole shews, that even the poor excuse of temporary excitement, founded on exaggerated reports as to the insurrection in Demerara, and misapprehensions as to the contents of Mr. Shrewsbury’s letter, cannot be allowed to the leaders and excitors of these disgraceful outrages. They argue a deeper and more permanent principle—a settled hostility to religion itself, and to the religious instruction of the negro and coloured population.” Now, he thought that he could satisfy the House, that it was not a settled hostility to religion itself, that existed in Barbadoes,—but a hostility to religion, as they understood it to be preached, or expected that it would be preached, by the Wesleyan Missionaries. The religious establishment which Parliament had provided had been received with the utmost cordiality and gratitude. He un-

derstood, that the legislature were prepared to grant £3,000 towards the expense of building a new Church at Bridgetown, and to make an annual grant of £600 for the support of the Colonial School. The Moravians had lately received from one individual a donation of £2,000. But, he would refer more particularly to the authority of the Rev. Mr. Hinds, a gentleman of the utmost respectability, the Principal of Codrington College, a college under the direction of the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel ; and it was to be remembered, that the statement of that gentleman was upon oath. Mr. Hinds stated, that when officiating as Missionary from the Society for the Conversion of Negro Slaves, he made many applications to the proprietors and overseers of estates, for liberty to instruct their slaves in religion ; that, without any exception, all his applications were favourably received ; and that, in several instances, great zeal and earnestness were manifested in the cause in which he was engaged. He had known the proprietor of an estate himself read prayers and explain the Scriptures to his slaves ; and he adds, “ from the inquiries which I made, as well as from my own observations, the impression left upon my mind is, that the general sense of the proprietors is in favour of

the religious instruction of the Negroes, whenever undertaken by Ministers of the Established Church." Many additional passages might be quoted, in corroboration of this opinion, and to shew the extent of religious instruction which the Slaves received, not only at the several parish churches (which were open at extraordinary hours, for the special purpose of giving to the Slaves lectures adapted to their capacity), but also at their own houses ; and an estimate had been made, that 10,000 slaves were receiving religious instruction weekly.

He should conclude his observations by repeating, that he had nothing to offer in the way of apology for what had occurred in the destruction of the Chapel, which had given rise to the motion of the Honourable Gentleman. He was willing, however, not only to hope, but to believe, that the actors in that disgraceful outrage, although they might have been under the influence of a sort of moral dementation, were not actuated by any want of intrinsic respect for Religion itself. He hoped, that the proof which these circumstances exhibited, of the existence of an angry and a dangerous spirit, would have the effect of inculcating caution on all classes of religious Missionary Societies, and of inducing them to endeavour to disarm

that spirit, by adopting measures of conciliation, and thereby to give full effect to those general measures of instruction and improvement which the House and the Country had sanctioned.

Mr. WILLIAM SMITH said, that not merely for the sake of the Wesleyan Missionaries, or the religious instruction of the Colonies, but for the honour of this country, he considered the motion of his Honourable Friend as highly important. It was absolutely necessary, that a lesson should be read to the inhabitants of Barbadoes; who had displayed, throughout this transaction, as well as upon other occasions, so dangerous and outrageous a spirit; and whose language was little short of rebellion. He was happy to find, that the Honourable Secretary for the Colonies had allowed their conduct to be wholly unjustifiable; though he seemed desirous of finding some ground for it, in the conduct of the Missionary Board, or of Mr. Shrewsbury. For his own part, he had no hesitation in saying, that there was not a shadow of a charge against Mr. Shrewsbury. The obnoxious Letter, of which so much had been said, contained no reflections on the white population of the Colony, half so strong, as those which were to be found in almost every publi-

cation, which had come, even recently, from the hands of gentlemen, who were the best acquainted with the condition of the West-Indies.

From the days of Bryan Edwards, down to the present year, similar descriptions had been uniformly given, by every writer who had resided there. He could, if necessary, furnish instances, abundant and indisputable; but, the facts were too notorious to be denied;—and, whether true or false, these representations were not confined to Mr. Shrewsbury, and could not therefore furnish ground of charge against him in particular: nor, however disreputable such conduct might appear in the eyes of the sober part of the British public, were the charges of a nature to excite the Negroes to insubordination;—but, they were amply sufficient to stimulate the Colonists to give vent to their dislike of the Missionary system, and to the splenetic feelings which they had long indulged against Mr. Shrewsbury and his Brethren;—men, however, whose character neither depended on their report, nor was to be accepted from such prejudiced hands. For their objects, their deserts, and the fruits of their labours, his Honourable Friend, the Member for Christchurch (Sir George Rose), would be

found a witness of the most accurate information and the highest authority. To Mr. Barham they could also appeal; and to almost every gentleman known in this country, as connected with the island in a way to do himself honour. That Honourable Member had also drawn a flattering contrast between the effect produced on the Negro character by the labours of the Wesleyan Missionaries, and those of the Members of the Established Church; who, to say the least of it, with a very few honourable exceptions, had seemed equally deficient in power and inclination, to render any services of this nature with general advantage.

He remembered that, some years ago, an attempt was made, by a part of the Magistracy of Kingston, in Jamaica, to put down the Methodist and Dissenting Chapels there, by refusing to grant licenses to their ministers. Upon that occasion, he, with some other friends of religious liberty, had remonstrated with His Majesty's Ministers on the subject. In consequence of that remonstrance, orders had been immediately sent out, to rescind the measures which had been taken; and, from that time to the present day, as he believed, no attempt had been there made, again to interfere with the liberty of worship. But, however improperly

those Magistrates upon that occasion might have acted, no riot, no tumult, had occurred ;— no destruction of property had been committed, nor any serious evil felt, but the partial interruption of the religious service. Such was the striking difference between this proceeding, unjustifiable as it was, and the violence perpetrated by the mob, styling itself “the respectable inhabitants of Barbadoes!” Such men as these, however, he was firmly persuaded, the “respectable inhabitants” of Jamaica would utterly disown as Brethren. He was sure that no men would more severely reprobate such transactions, than the Gentlemen connected with that island resident here, with whom he had the pleasure to be acquainted. And yet, some parts of the Honourable Secretary’s speech too much resembled an attempt to excuse outrages, which had gone the length of defying all legal authority, and even threatening murder.

The Honourable Secretary had recommended conciliation and forbearance. Now, conciliation had been very long tried; and, he was sorry to say, had not produced the beneficial effects which had been promised. When Lord Seaforth had proposed a Bill, to declare the wanton and wilful killing of a Slave to be murder, the

planters pertinaciously opposed the enactment ; —not on the pretext, that the mere supposition of such a law being necessary was an insult ; for its necessity had been demonstrated by a recent occurrence—but merely because they were, forsooth, too high-minded to submit to a law which they disapproved : and the manner, too, in which it had been refused was most offensive. Nor had he been able to trace, from that day to this, any change of feeling in the people of that island, which could lead him to suppose, that such an outrage as was now complained of, might not, at any time, have been committed : the extravagance of the action did not, in his mind, form any presumption against its probability.—Stronger measures than any which the House had yet taken, were, he was convinced, necessary to repress this spirit ; and, if some such steps should not be taken, on the first occasion which should present itself, whether a Bishop or a Missionary were employed in the obnoxious work, the most reasonable demands would be rejected, if they happened not to suit the pride of the Assembly, or the caprice of the people. There had always existed, on the part of the inhabitants of that Island, the most inordinate and ridiculous ideas of their own importance. They

seemed, in this instance, to be nearly on the same level with the poor simple Welchman, who exclaimed, when he was about to leave the city of Bristol, "Alas! what will become of thee, poor Bristol, when I am gone!" They should be taught, that, however valuable to a few individuals may be the Estates they possess there, to the empire of Great Britain, as a national possession, their Island is but as a toy, which, if destroyed, would, in a very short time, be scarcely missed, and ere long be quite forgotten: and that, instead of being one of the props of this country, as had been sillily boasted, her conduct tended only to embarrass and to tease the too-forbearing Government of the Mother Country, and to bring the Colonies into contempt.

Mr. BUTTERWORTH said, that being connected with the Wesleyan Missionary Society, he must request the indulgence of the House, while he made a very few observations on the case now under consideration. The Honourable Colonial Secretary, at the commencement of his speech, had stated, that all these subjects relative to Missions in the Colonies, should be treated in a spirit of conciliation, and not with hostility. He could assure the Honourable

Gentleman, that a spirit of conciliation had uniformly been manifested by Mr. Shrewsbury and the rest of the Missionaries, as well as by those who had the management of the Wesleyan Missions. Nothing could more directly prove this, than the conduct of Mr. Shrewsbury, when, after the destruction of his house and property, for no offence—when he had been forced to escape for his life out of the island of Barbadoes, with his wife, at the very moment she expected to be confined, he sat down as soon as he landed in St. Vincent's, and wrote that most judicious and conciliatory pastoral Letter to his distressed Flock in Barbadoes, which had been alluded to by the Honourable Mover. In this letter he entreated them not to resent the unprovoked injury which they had sustained, but to bear with meekness and patience every insult, and not to render evil for evil. Nothing could be more conciliatory, nor better evince the Christian spirit of forbearance, than that admirable letter.

With regard to the conduct of the Wesleyan Mission Committee, although they had deeply felt the gross injury and violent outrage which had been committed, yet they had excited no spirit of resentment at home. The table of the House might easily have been covered with petitions from all parts of the kingdom for jus-

tice in so flagrant a case; but, not one had been presented, and, indeed, the present motion was not made by the instigation of the Mission Committee: it was the spontaneous act of the Honourable Mover. So far from the Society wishing to excite a spirit of resentment, they only lamented, that the Gentlemen of Barbadoes did not see their own true interest, and encourage the Missions, as had been done in the other West-India Colonies. For, certain he was, that the Slaves became more industrious, more sober, more honest, and, in every respect, more valuable, when brought under the influence of moral and religious principles. He did not give this as his own opinion merely; for he had abundant evidence to prove it. In the year 1817, when prejudices were excited against the Missionaries, he, together with the late Member for Midhurst, Mr. Thompson of Hull, sent a circular letter to the West-India Colonies, addressed to Gentlemen not belonging to the Methodist Society, inquiring into the character and conduct of the Wesleyan Missionaries, and of the effects produced by their preaching and labours on the Slaves; and he had now in his possession abundance of letters, from Governors, Members of Council, Judges, Barristers at Law, Physicians, Planters and Proprietors of Estates, Merchants,

and others, bearing ample testimony to the beneficial effects of the Wesleyan Missions on the minds of the Slaves, and of the general good character and conduct of the Missionaries. He was sorry that Barbadoes was almost the only Colony in which the Missions were not encouraged. Liberal subscriptions had been contributed to the Missions by Proprietors of Slaves, in most of the other Islands.

He regretted, that the Honourable Secretary had made any animadversion on the Annual Report of the Wesleyan Missionary Society. It was surely necessary, that such a flagrant outrage as the one committed at Barbadoes should be noticed in the Annual Report; and it certainly had been done in temperate, measured language, considering the unprovoked injury which had been sustained. The Honourable Secretary had also seemed to insinuate, that the doctrines preached by the Missionaries tended to inculcate insubordination among the Slaves, and to lessen their value. [Mr. Wilmot Horton, across the table said, he must correct the Honourable Member; he had not given this as his opinion, but that it was the opinion of some in Barbadoes.] Well! whether such an opinion were held here or there, he would challenge any one to prove the fact. These Missions were

not of yesterday: they had been established upwards of forty years; and, during all that time, there never had been a single charge substantiated against the doctrines taught by the Wesleyan Missionaries. Indeed, their doctrines and liturgy were those of the Established Church of England.

With regard to the instruction afforded by the Clergy of the Established Church in the Colonies, it was generally admitted, by their own Returns to Lord Bathurst's Circular Letter, printed by this House in 1818, that the Clergy did not consider themselves fitted, or responsible, for the instruction of the Slaves; nor had they the means of affording instruction. If he recollected right, in the Returns made by the Rev. Mr. Chaderton, Rector of St. Paul's, Antigua, he had stated, that he could only admit about thirty Slaves into his Church after the Whites were accommodated; and there were nearly 4,000 Slaves in his parish.

The Honourable Secretary had charged Mr. Shrewsbury with exciting the violence which had occurred at Barbadoes, by exhibiting his Letter by way of defiance. The very reverse was the fact. The Letter had been printed in the Colony for three years, without exciting any particular observation; but, when the un-

happy affair in Demerara occurred, it produced a bitter spirit against all Missionaries, and then the Barbadians endeavoured to find some charge against Mr. Shrewsbury. They examined his reports, as printed in the Missionary Notices, and particularly his Letter of 1820, which was a public document in the island, and they grossly misrepresented it. Mr. Shrewsbury, merely in self-defence, to prevent such further misrepresentation, and from the best motives, to promote peace and good-will, took the printed copy of his Letter and left it at the Commercial Rooms, that it might speak for itself; and he would beg permission to read to the House a passage from Mr. Shrewsbury's own account of this transaction, written at the time, *viz.* the 18th October 1823, the day before the riot, and which was sent to this country, and printed by the Committee in London, 15th December, 1823.

“ When the intelligence of the insurrection of the Slaves in Demerara reached Barbadoes, it was publicly posted up in the Commercial Rooms, that ‘ The Methodist clergymen of Demerara were both imprisoned, they being *deeply implicated* in the insurrection which had ‘ broken out in that Colony.’ This falsehood, stated in so public a manner, set the people in a flame. Fresh stories were circulated every

day. The Island newspapers (one excepted) teemed with invectives against certain hypocritical characters, who, under the pretence of giving religious instruction to the Slaves, were introducing principles entirely subversive of those foundations on which the comfort and happiness of society rested. My letter of 1820, was again revived, and some confidently asserted, that I had therein stated, that 'the Slaves ought to take their liberty by force, if it could not be otherwise obtained.' To silence this report, I carried the number, containing the Letter, to the Commercial Rooms, that any one who chose might read it. This measure considerably allayed the public ferment, till one of the printers published scraps of the letter in his paper, with comments upon it, which quickly revived the public resentment, and increased it to a still higher pitch. Not only were my words misrepresented, but it was further said, and by many believed, that the letter I produced was not the real one; that I had obtained that which I made public from home, merely to blind the eyes of the people; and that the genuine letter contained the vilest calumnies against the Barbadians, that were ever sent home to England. Yet more; every sermon I delivered became

a subject of conversation afterwards; so that, not a week occurred but I was charged with having said something in my public discourse, which endangered the peace of the colony; and to all this it was added, that I held private meetings with the Slaves, to get all the information from them I could, to convey intelligence to the African Institution. These things have all combined to arouse the public feeling against us; and the official despatches relative to the late discussions in Parliament coming at this crisis, consummated the whole. I especially am now hated of all men."

With regard, therefore, to Mr. Shrewsbury's motive for taking the letter of 1820 to the Commercial Rooms, it was merely to silence clamour, and certainly not to provoke hostility. He had received the most ample testimonials to Mr. Shrewsbury's general good conduct, especially from one highly respectable gentleman in Granada, who owned, or had the charge of about two thousand five hundred Slaves, with whom Mr. Shrewsbury lived some years, and was particularly useful in improving the general character of his Negroes. As there did not appear to be any particular objection to the motion, he should refrain from offering to the House some further observations, which he should otherwise have

made, respecting the general object and tendency of the Missions.

Mr. Secretary CANNING observed, That as it was evident that no possible advantage could result from prolonging the present debate, he did not offer any apology for addressing himself thus early to the House, for the purpose of stating the course which His Majesty's Government were prepared to take upon the Honourable Gentleman's motion. He begged, however, in the first place, to advert to an expression which had been made use of by the Honourable Member who spoke last, in referring to the speech of his Honourable Friend behind him, the Secretary for the Colonies, as an intended *justification* of the proceedings which had taken place at Barbadoes. The Honourable Member must have given the speech of his Honourable Friend that designation, from mere inadvertence. Upon a little reflection, the Honourable Member would admit, that it was, in no fair sense, applicable to his (Mr. C.'s) Honourable Friend's statement. In all human concerns indeed, it was a difficult process to develope the course of a transaction, involving many persons, and diversified by many different occurrences—and to assign in

detail the motives and reasons which led to it, without appearing to use, on the one hand, inflammatory language, or on the other, the language of justification. His Honourable Friend (Mr. W. Horton) had endeavoured to give such an analysis ;—and, the attempt had subjected him to the usual misrepresentations.

Of the transaction itself, to which the papers on the table of the House related, it was impossible that there should be more than one opinion : namely, that it was unjustifiable, indefensible—a violation of law and justice—a defiance of all legal authority—a flying in the face of Parliament, and of the country. [Hear, hear ! from both sides of the House.] In every expression of abhorrence at so great an outrage, he fully concurred with the Honourable Member for Weymouth ; and, if he differed from that Honourable Gentleman in opinion, as to the mode in which the House ought to proceed upon the occasion, that difference was solely founded on practical considerations, arising out of the circumstances of the case, and not upon a favourable estimate of the character of the transaction itself. He admitted even, that it was a case, in which the duty of the House of Commons would be better performed by interfering, than by passing it by

unobserved: but, he thought it, at the same time, expedient for the House, so to regulate its interference, as neither to leave unmarked, on the one hand, the expression of its indignation, nor to involve itself, on the other hand, in questions of unnecessary difficulty.

The case of Mr. Shrewsbury had been placed in comparison with that of Mr. Smith, the Missionary of Demerara; but very erroneously, as appeared to him (Mr. Canning); since, there was this striking difference in the two cases. Of Mr. Smith he was desirous of saying nothing harsh or disrespectful. His guilt or innocence was not the debate of that night;—and, whatever his errors might have been, he had, God knew, more than amply atoned for them. But, in Mr. Smith's case there was an imputation of guilt—or error—(call it by what name you would), which at least provoked, if it did not justify, animadversion.* In the conduct of Mr. Shrewsbury, he must be allowed to say, that there did not appear the slightest ground of blame or suspicion. [Hear, hear!]

Allusion had been made to the Letter which Mr. Shrewsbury had felt it his duty to address to his correspondents in this country. It could not be denied, that Mr. Shrewsbury was at liberty to write that letter. To Mr. Shrews-

bury, therefore, no blame whatever attached, on account of its contents. But, he must say, that it was a gross instance of imprudence to publish that letter : nor could he conceive any thing more likely to paralyze the future efforts of their Missionary, than that publication by the Missionary Society. The sending back to Barbadoes, to be circulated throughout the colony, Mr. Shrewsbury's free remarks upon its inhabitants, was to mark him out for distrust and dislike, if not (as had turned out to be the event) for persecution. The object of the Missionary Society ought to have been, to enable Mr. Shrewsbury to stem the prejudices which prevailed against his sect. Before he had time, however, to conciliate, by his peaceable and steady behaviour, those to whom he was sent, this firebrand had been flung amongst the Barbadians ; and, from that moment, all the prospects of his individual usefulness in that community, were at an end. But, of this unlucky mistake the blame rested not on Mr. Shrewsbury. Nor did he state the provocation—though a most unwise and unnecessary one—as a justification of the conduct of the Barbadians.

In considering the course which it was the duty of the House to adopt upon the present

occasion, it was necessary for Honourable Gentlemen to bear in mind, that there were four classes of persons to whom the attention of the House had been drawn. In the first place, there was that class of unknown persons in Barbadoes, who had personally committed the outrage which formed the subject of the motion: Secondly, the insular Magistracy, who, it was impossible to say, had done their duty, or had even shown themselves sensible of the duty which they had to do: Thirdly, there was the Governor of the Colony: and, Lastly, there was the Government at home.

With respect to the conduct of the Governor of the Colony, he was disposed to view it with great indulgence. Indeed, there was no disposition, in any quarter, to impute blame to him. Undoubtedly, it was in his power to have called out the military forces under his command; but, that was an extreme course, which, the rather, perhaps, from his being a military man, he was unwilling to take, when informed by his official legal adviser, that such a course was not within the limits of his authority. The Governor did not appear to have been then aware of the extent of that authority: but, having been since instructed, by His Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies,

that his authority, as Governor, was much wider than he supposed it to be, he had shewn every disposition to exercise it to its utmost extent: which, indeed, he had so effectually done, as to prevent the repetition of similar outrages in the colony.

With respect to the conduct of the Government at home, he thought it was impossible—indeed, no disposition was evinced—to charge it with remissness. Lord Bathurst had done every thing in his power, to avoid a recurrence of the disgraceful scenes that had taken place, by calling upon the Governor to exercise an extended authority; pronouncing animadversions on the magistracy; and requiring a more accurate investigation into the manner in which that body discharged its functions.

It had been asked, why the Magistrates had in no way been punished, except by a slight reprimand from the Governor; and how it came to pass, that their dismissal had not been recommended? Looking on the face of the Papers, it certainly did appear to him, that many of those magistrates ought to be removed from their offices. But, unacquainted, as he necessarily was, with the state of society in Barbadoes, he was not prepared to say, that, if the present magistrates were displaced, others could be pro-

cured, who would discharge the duties of their office in a more satisfactory manner. This could be no very satisfactory reason, to be sure, for continuing things on their present footing; but, it was an imperative one, if it existed: and, not knowing whether it existed, or not, the Colonial Secretary of State could not, without great indiscretion, and risk of mischief, have sent an order to displace a whole magistracy—even if the Government had the lawful power to do so.

The fourth Class were the rioters themselves;—guilty, but numerous, and unknown. In defence, or in extenuation at least, of the riot, blame had been thrown upon the Wesleyan Missionaries in general. He (Mr. Canning), was not at all inclined to disparage the character of that body, or to undervalue their labours. But, with every due sense of their merits, and of the good which they had effected in the Colonies,—good, not only spiritual, but political—he was not disposed to confine the education and moral improvement of the inhabitants of the West-Indies, to their exclusive protection. He was a friend to toleration, in the full extent and meaning of the term; but, he did not understand that kind of toleration, which was to be confined to one particular class or body, to the

exclusion of other bodies, equally meritorious. He wished the Established Church to live in charity with all Sects; and to avail itself of all the aids and appliances which they might furnish. But, he did not see why the Church of England should be considered as the only Establishment unfit for its own work; and incompetent to deal with the subjects and colonies of England. He said this in passing; because, he thought he observed a disposition to raise the Sectaries, not up to a level with the Church, but beyond it; and make the Church itself an exception, rather than the rule and standard of our Ecclesiastical Establishment.

But, to return to the immediate question. A reference had been made to certain expressions which had fallen from him, in a former session, during the discussion of certain propositions, calculated to promote the amelioration of the condition of the Negroes of the West-Indies. Undoubtedly, he had said, that if, in the prosecution of that cause, he experienced resistance from the West-Indies, partaking of the nature of contumacy, he should consider it right to come down to Parliament for counsel and assistance. To that opinion he still adhered: and it was plain, that he so far admitted its application to the present case, as to allow that it

was one in which something should be done by the House of Commons. The question was, what that something should be.

The proposed Address to the Crown pledges the House to assist His Majesty, in enforcing the rebuilding of the Chapel which had been demolished, at the expense of the people of Barbadoes. Such a proposition appeared to him to involve a most dangerous principle. It was one which had very rarely been acted upon in this country. There were, he believed, in the annals of Parliament, two prominent instances of penal infliction upon a large community, for the acts of undiscovered individuals. Those instances were that of the Porteous riot, at Edinburgh, and, more recently, the Boston Port Bill. The former had not been without its difficulties. The latter was a most inauspicious precedent; and one which he was sure the House would not be very precipitate to adopt. If, however, the House were prepared to admit such a principle, they should also be prepared, with all their hearts, and with every nerve of their frames, to follow it up, and fearlessly meet the result.

The Executive Government alone could do nothing to accomplish the Honourable Gentleman's object. The Address would, therefore, be a delusion, if it did not point distinctly to an

act of the Legislature. It was by an act of Parliament alone, that the people of Barbadoes could be compelled to do that which the Honourable Member recommended. But, was the House prepared to levy money, for internal purposes, upon the people of that Island, who had an independent legislature of their own? He begged to be understood, as not giving any general opinion, as to the existence or non-existence of that transcendent power in the metropolitan Parliament of the Monarchy. That was one of the questions which lied deepest in the very penetralia of the Constitution, and which (as he had said upon the occasion before referred to) it would be unwise to stir, except upon an adequate occasion.—Was this an adequate occasion? He thought not.

Was he (Mr. Canning), however, desirous to induce the House to pass over the outrage which had been committed? No such thing. Although he did not think the case was one which called for such an exercise of authority as the Resolution of the Honourable Member indicated, he nevertheless thought it was one, on which it was fitting that the House of Commons should express its opinion—not in censure of the Governor of Barbadoes, for the Honourable Mover did not mean to blame him—nor of

the Home Government, for that had done confessedly every thing in its power—but, in aid of both, and for the purpose of proving to the Colonies, that the opinion of the House and the country was, that the Governor had done his duty, and that they were ready to give him their support, if necessary, in what future exigencies might require to be done. He had prepared an Amendment to that effect, which he would read to the House :

“Resolved, That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, to represent to His Majesty, that this House, having taken into their most serious consideration the papers laid before them, relating to the demolition of the Methodist Chapel in Barbadoes, deem it their duty to declare, that they view with the utmost indignation that scandalous and daring violation of the law, and having seen with great satisfaction the instructions which have been sent out by His Majesty’s Secretary of State to the Governor of Barbadoes, to prevent a recurrence of similar outrages, they humbly assure His Majesty of their readiness to concur in every measure which his Majesty may deem necessary for securing ample protection and religious toleration to all His Majesty’s subjects in that part of His Majesty’s dominions.”

The Honourable Mover would see, that the principal difference between the Amendment and the original Resolution—except in what related to the rebuilding of the Chapel—was, the substitution of the word “indignation,” for “amazement and detestation.” He believed the substituted phrase was the more parliamentary. At all events, it was, on the present occasion, the most correct : for it did appear somewhat extraordinary, that the Honourable Member should propose to declare the “amazement” of the House at an event, which he had stated, both at the outset and the conclusion of his speech, to have been exactly agreeable to his own expectation. As an admonition to the inhabitants of Barbadoes, and as an expression of the opinion of the House, he (Mr. Canning) thought the amended Address would be equal in effect to any questionable attempt at more serious practical punishment. Let not the principle of such more weighty infliction be supposed to be disavowed : but, contented to meet the present occasion with what was sufficient for the purpose, let us permit that principle to lie dormant in the omnipotent bosom of Parliament ; never to be brought forth into action, until the Legislature saw itself called upon, by a more urgent exigency, to arm itself with extra-

ordinary terrors ; and was consequently prepared, with all efforts and at all risks, to push that principle to its utmost extremity.

The Amendment further improved, as he (Mr. Canning) thought, upon the original Resolution, by expressly approving of the conduct of the Executive Government at home. The effect of passing any resolution, which did not contain such an expression of approval, would be to impeach that conduct ; and, sure he was, that it was not the intention of the Honourable Mover to do that, which would be, in effect, to side with the contumacious Barbadians, against the Secretary of State. On the contrary, the Honourable Gentleman would feel, that a cordial approbation of what the King's Government had done, would be the most useful encouragement and support to them, in what they might yet have to do.

Believing, therefore, that, both as to what it omitted, and as to what it supplied, the Address which he proposed would meet the necessity of the case, the wishes of the House, and even the object of the Honourable Gentleman himself, better than his own Resolution, he would conclude by proposing it for the adoption of the House.—The Right Honourable Gentleman then moved, by way of

Amendment, to leave out from the word "Barbadoes" to the end of the Question, in order to add the words, "deem it their duty to declare, that they view with the utmost indignation, that scandalous and daring violation of the Law ; and having seen with great satisfaction the instructions which have been sent out by His Majesty's Secretary of State to the Governor of Barbadoes, to prevent a recurrence of similar outrages, they humbly assure His Majesty of their readiness to concur in every measure which His Majesty may deem necessary, for securing ample protection, and religious toleration, to all His Majesty's subjects in that part of His Majesty's Dominions," instead thereof.

Mr. BUTTERWORTH observed,—That he was quite sure that the Amendment of the Right Honourable Gentleman who had just sat down would afford ample satisfaction to the Wesleyan Mission Committee. They had no feelings of resentment to gratify. All they wanted was protection for their Missionaries, while they conducted themselves properly. With regard, however, to what the Right Honourable Gentleman had stated, that Mr. Shrewsbury's letter of 1820 was very pro-

per for him to write to the Committee, but most injudicious in the latter to publish, and that it was like throwing a firebrand into the Colony—he must confess, that he thought very differently. It was an accurate description of the moral condition of the island; and, unless the Subscribers to the Missions were made acquainted with the actual state of those countries to which the Missionaries were sent, whether to our own Colonies or to Heathen lands, they could not be expected to support the Missions. In respect to the letter being like “a firebrand,” it certainly was a very cold one; for it had lain publicly in the Colony for three years, without producing any light or heat, until it was kindled by the flame which arrived from Demerara, and by gross misrepresentations in Barbadoes.

Mr. BROUGHAM rose and said—That after the course taken by the Right Honourable Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, the few observations which he should feel it his duty to offer would be of little importance. He was happy to say, that he highly approved of the Amendment; which, unlike many other propositions bearing that name, and proceeding from the other side of the House, was, in truth as well as in name, an amendment of the origi-

nal motion. But, he would now, as he did upon all other occasions, enter his protest against any parallel being set up, between the case of the Northern States of America and the West-India Islands. He denied that there existed the remotest similarity in their relations with the Mother Country. The defiance of North America was truly formidable, and to encounter it was, on the part of this country, the height of folly : the threats of the Islands were justly a subject of ridicule.

It was not, however, because they were powerless, that he would argue that any illegal or unjust course was to be adopted towards them. Far from it. He had ever contended, that even the weakness of a community constituted a stronger claim against being trampled upon by oppressive interference. It was because he held the right to be on our side, that he warned the Islands once more against provoking us to shew our power also ; and reminded the House that, as for the safety of exercising our undoubted prerogative, Great Britain had nothing to fear from the West-Indies—from its largest colony, down to the smallest of the Virgin Isles. They might menace—but, it was all trifling. The language of this country should be to the West-India

Assemblies—that, if they did not discharge their duties, the United Parliament would do its duty—that it would exercise that legislative right, which, except upon the point of taxation, it had reserved to itself, and secured by a declaratory law. No man who knew the least of the question could harbour a doubt on this point. No man who had read the words of our Statutes, or reflected on the events out of which they arose, could hesitate an instant in admitting, that Parliament possessed the full right of internal legislation in all the Colonies—frequently exercised that right—and had only consented to abandon it upon the single matter of revenue.

There was, he thought, a very remarkable difference between the tone of the Right Honourable Secretary of State and the Under Secretary for the Colonial department, in speaking of the outrages which had been committed in Barbadoes. It might be, that as the former was oftentimes obliged to mitigate his language here and elsewhere, to pacify the Holy Allies and their ministers, so the latter was forced to consider the Islands and their agents. While the Secretary of State gave full vent to his feelings on colonial questions, the Under Secretary spoke freely on foreign affairs. On this

subject, however, the Honourable Under Secretary was rather mealy-mouthed. He dealt out his censure very charily, upon the conduct of those by whom the disgraceful outrage in question had been committed. According to the Honourable Gentleman, they had been betrayed by their feelings into the course which they had pursued. In an amiable excess of sensibility, they had only burnt down a chapel—only made a great riot—only levied war against the king, and committed high treason! [A laugh.] The Honourable Gentleman certainly allowed, that the act was much to be lamented; and he also lamented the cause of the act. This amiable indiscretion, it seemed, was occasioned by a wish to preserve their property, on the part of those who committed it. “Just as if a man,” said Mr. Brougham, “professing merely to protect his own purse, should indiscreetly, but through a pardonable, if not an amiable indiscretion, take mine.” [A laugh.] To protect their own property, these amiable but indicreet persons went and destroyed a Meeting-house belonging to others. And then, these offences, committed day after day, and night after night, were absolutely gloried in by their perpetrators, and called the triumph of true religion! They ransacked, pulled down,

burnt, destroyed, demolished the property of others; were nearly committing murder, and did commit treason—and all to give a triumph to “true religion!” Excesses had often been perpetrated in the name of Religion, as well as of Liberty; but, never before, even in the most barbarous times, had that sacred name been more prostituted, than in Barbadoes. [Hear!]

With respect to the Missionaries, he must declare, that they had done great good—unmixed good—in the West-Indian Colonies. The Church must, of course, be protected; but, he would deal with an equal hand, and afford protection to the Sects likewise. The Church was not adapted to the spiritual exigencies of the colonies. It was quite impossible that the task of instructing the Slaves could be left to the Established Church alone. The very accomplishments of its Clergymen, the education which they received at Oxford and at Cambridge, unfitted them for the task of converting and educating the unfortunate beings, who ought to be the peculiar objects of proselytism and instruction. In a very able Pamphlet on the Treatment of the Negroes, published by an Honourable Member of that House (Sir George Rose), the author, a member of the Church of England, and warmly attached to its doctrines

and discipline, notwithstanding all his prejudices in favour of the Establishment, had laid down the principle to which he (Mr. Brougham) had just adverted, had supported it by argument, and illustrated it by example. Nay, even the Clergy of the West-Indies themselves, had, many years ago, borne the most satisfactory testimony to the superior advantages possessed by the Methodist Ministers, in teaching the negroes; and had admitted, that if those negroes were to be taught at all, it must be by such instructors. The question, indeed, now was, whether the negroes should be taught at all: for, if they were to be taught, Methodists alone could teach them.

He was exceedingly sorry, however, to find, that such was not the opinion of a Right Reverend person who had lately been sent over to the West-Indies, as Bishop of Jamaica. Bishop Lipscomb (whose First Fruits, remitted to the Colonial Office and treasured in the papers before the House, he (Mr. Brougham) feared would be found, when weighed, of more insignificant value, than those of the poorest of the Welsh Bishops), in his despatch to the Noble Earl at the head of that department, asserted, that the negroes were very favourable to the Established Church, and, on the contrary, re-

garded the Sectaries with a most unfavourable eye. It was worth observing, that this despatch from the Right Reverend Prelate was dated the 12th of March. He could not have arrived in the colony long before the beginning of March. [Some Honourable Member denied this.] He (Mr. Brougham) had the means of knowing, that the Bishop could not have arrived at Jamaica long before the beginning of March; because, he happened to know professionally, that the vessel which carried their Lordships, the West-India Bishops, out, sailed pretty far on in the month of December. Notwithstanding which, the moment he gets there, he sees what is the religious disposition of the Slaves. Let the House remark, how very much the Right Reverend Prelate differed from his more humble Ecclesiastical predecessors. He said—"A very strong predilection exists for the doctrines of the Church of England, if opportunities for attending Divine Service were afforded them." Now, how could the Right Reverend Prelate by possibility discover, during his residence of two or three weeks in the colonies, that this predilection for the doctrines of the Established Church existed among the poor negroes? How much did they know of the Thirty-nine Articles, or of the difference be-

tween "consubstantiation" and "transubstantiation?" But, no matter! the Bishop expresses his conviction, that they entertain "a very strong predilection" for the doctrines of the Established Church: and he adds—"Wherever I go, I find the greatest aversion to Sectarianism, of every kind and denomination; but every degree of confidence in any teachers of religion, whom I may be pleased to appoint." Why, really, the island of Jamaica must be a perfect Bishop's Paradise, thus delighted as the population were with the Church of England, and abhorring, with a true orthodox abhorrence, all Sectarianism!

It appeared also, by the Bishop's despatch, that "psalmody and organs had great attractions for them; that they seemed particularly fond of form and ceremony; and were greater critics than many persons would give them credit for." [Mr. Canning here said, across the table, that the persons alluded to could not surely be the negroes.] Yes, the poor negroes. The Learned Bishop no sooner arrives in the Colony, than, with the eye of a lynx, he thus dives into all the depths of the negro character.—"From the great uncertainty and capriciousness," continued he, "of the negro character, it is difficult to make sure of their attendance,

even where great pains have been taken; but, whenever a preacher is popular, they dress out their children and themselves—a sure sign they are in good humour.” So, it seemed, that the better the humour the negroes were in, the better they dressed! “Psalmody and organs have great attractions for them: they seem particularly fond of form and ceremony.” No great proof, by the bye, of “the great uncertainty and capriciousness” of their character; at least in the eyes of a regular Episcopalian, whom we might expect to find prone to rank such predilections among the indications of a solid and wise frame of mind—“and are greater critics than many persons will give them credit for; remarking every particularity of manner and gesture, and have a great predilection for a powerful sonorous voice” [a laugh].

The Right Reverend Prelate then proceeded to say—“As soon as my Archdeacon and myself have visited the several parishes, which we purpose doing immediately.”—It appeared, then, that the Bishop made this Report, before he had seen the people. Elsewhere, investigation generally preceded decision; in Jamaica, it seemed, it was to follow after. The Learned Divine reversed the usual course of proceeding—which was to see first and report afterwards; for he

made up his Report, in the first instance, and then said, that he would go and see what he had been writing about! The Bishop went on thus—"I shall not fail to communicate to your Lordship whatever I may deem useful and practical. In the mean time, I am happy in being able to assure your Lordship, that a very general wish to ameliorate the condition of the Slaves, and to instruct them in the principles of the Established Church, seems to pervade the great mass of Proprietors, and every facility is afforded me of visiting the several plantations."

Now, whatever the Bishop of Jamaica and his Archdeacon might hold of the opinions of the Negroes, he (Mr. Brougham) really could not help thinking, that the Bishop and the Archdeacon knew very little about the best way of teaching or educating the Negroes. The fact was—and it was known to all who knew any thing of the West-India Islands—that the Missionaries were the only real and efficient teachers of the Black population; and hence the peculiar atrocity of that gross and scandalous outrage to the law, to the interests of religion, to sound policy and the best interests of the Planters themselves, which had been perpetrated, in so daring a manner, in the Island of Barbadoes; and which was the subject of

the present discussion. It had been said, that Mr. Shrewsbury should not have written the letter which had been alluded to. He could not, however, for a moment believe, that the letter was the cause of the ill-treatment which that excellent man had received. Confident he was, that the outrage was not directed against Mr. Shrewsbury as a libeller, but as a Missionary.

It is now about a year (continued Mr. Brougham) since we were occupied in discussing another outrage similar to the present, as to the motives in which it originated; and I then solemnly adjured the House to redeem its pledge, if the planters persevered in forfeiting theirs; warning the planters, moreover, that we should one day do our duty, if they obstinately persisted in breaking all faith, and putting off for ever the day of amendment. Month after month has rolled away—and, what have they done? Nothing—or, rather, I cannot say nothing—but that which far more significantly than mere inaction indicates their determination to violate every vow, and go on deceiving and mocking us, as long as we will submit to be mocked and deceived. In Trinidad, they have offered every impediment short of open resistance to the enforcement of the Order in

Council. In no one of the Islands have they carried the great measure of admitting Negro testimony : and, in one only, have they attempted it. Yet, mark the instructive history of that attempt. A Bill was brought in, providing for the competency of Negro evidence, within very limited bounds, it is true—but still an important amendment of the law. The Duke of Manchester reports on this step ; and congratulates the government at home on the prospect of its being carried, as it had been brought in without a division, and by the most respectable and leading member of the Assembly. But, soon after the date of his Grace's despatch, came the first reading ; and then, the division being taken, there appeared, out of *thirty-five* present, exactly *thirty-four* against the Bill, and one single voice in its favour ! This fact is a volume ; and whoever, after this, shall expect much from Colonial Assemblies, will have himself only, and not them, to upbraid, for whatever disappointment he may experience.

But, if they abandon their duty—if they will not redeem their pledges—at least I will redeem mine ; and unless, before the next session of parliament, I shall see them acting in good earnest, to shew that they are at length resolved to make amends for the time thus squandered

away, I desire to be understood as now giving notice of my determination to present a Bill to you, for the purpose of bettering the condition of our fellow subjects, the Negroes, in all the British Colonies. This measure will embrace the following distinct objects :—

First ; to make Negro evidence admissible in all cases, in all courts, leaving of course its credit to the consideration of the Court and Jury :

Secondly ; to prevent the use of the Whip, as applied to Women, entirely ; and as a stimulus to labour, whether for Men or Women :

Thirdly ; to attach all Slaves to the soil, rendering them inseparable from it, in any circumstances :

Fourthly ; to prohibit persons holding West-India property, or any mortgage upon such property, filling any office, civil or military (except regimental) in the West-Indies :

And, Lastly ; to secure, by such means as may be safe at once to the Owner and the Slave, the gradual, but, ultimately, the complete admission of that injured class of men, to the blessings of personal liberty. [Hear, hear !]

If I am alive and in parliament, I will, early next session, move you for leave to bring in this Bill. I know that I shall have the zealous sup-

port of almost all who sit around me. I trust I shall have the concurrence of a majority of the House. I am sure I shall have with me the great body of the people, out of doors. Nor, should I be wanting, will this measure be abandoned. It is the result of mature deliberation : it is the fruit of extensive concert : it is now pressed forward after long delay, and great forbearance : and, as it signifies little to whose hands the proposal is entrusted, so by some one, or other, will it surely be brought forward, even if I am no longer here present to discharge this duty ; and, unless the West-Indians shall of themselves prevent it, let them be well assured, that it will, sooner or later, but probably at no distant day, be carried. [Hear, hear !]

Mr. BERNAL said, that after the great temper and moderation which had been shewn in the early part of the discussion, he could not help thinking it a little hard, that the Honourable and Learned Member for Winchester, should have excursed into so wide and sweeping a field of invective. Those Honourable Members, who were either West-India proprietors, or were otherwise connected with the Colonies, had not had any previous notice given to them, that they would thus be put

upon their trial. Could any one have expected, after hearing the terms of the original motion, and the judicious and discriminating amendment of the Right Honourable Secretary for Foreign Affairs, that those proprietors would have been exposed to the unsparing abuse of the Honourable and Learned Gentleman? From authority which was unquestionable, he could boldly state, that the Honourable and Learned Gentleman was not warranted in the attack which he had thought proper to make on the House of Assembly in Jamaica. He denied, that the Bill which that House had passed to prevent the arrest of Slaves on a market-day, was so much for the benefit of the master, as it was for the slave. The legislative Assembly of Jamaica had not been influenced by motives of a selfish nature. They had, he firmly believed, been actuated by the desire of considering the interests of the Negroes; and of proceeding in a due course of improvement, temperately and steadily. But, why the conduct of the House of Assembly, or of the resident inhabitants of Jamaica, was to be brought under discussion upon the present motion, he was utterly at a loss to determine.—With respect to the immediate subject before the House, he admitted, that he had always entertained a great respect

for the labours of the Wesleyan and other Missionaries in the West-India islands. Those labours had always tended to preserve that peace, which the Gospel of Christ inculcated. Nor would he, for one moment, attempt to justify the outrage which had been perpetrated in the island of Barbadoes.—With regard to the excitement in that island, that might, in a great measure, be attributed to circumstances connected with what had taken place in other West-India Colonies as well as in Barbadoes itself. The Barbadians, apparently, were under great irritation. The Governor of Barbadoes, as would be seen from the Papers which had been laid on the table, had been advised, that the provisions of the Riot Act did not extend to the Island of Barbadoes; and that the calling out of a military force in aid of the civil power, would have cast a burthen of considerable responsibility upon the Governor; and, subsequently, the opinions of the first Law Officers of the Crown were applied for, and obtained, in England.—He must repeat his regret at the tone which the Honourable and Learned Gentleman always assumed, when he spoke of the West-India Islands. It was a tone of menace: it was a hostile threat. It had no resemblance to the conciliatory advice of a sincere friend. If the Honour-

able and Learned Gentleman thought that, by assuming such a tone, he stood a chance of doing good in the colonies, he was entirely mistaken: for, not only in Jamaica, but throughout the whole of the West-Indies, nothing could be calculated more effectually to create irritation, than the course which the Honourable and Learned Gentleman uniformly thought proper to pursue.

Mr. MANNING said :—Mr. Speaker, I am very desirous of being permitted to say a few words, in consequence of what has fallen from the Honourable Member for Weymouth, respecting the inhabitants of the Island of Barbadoes. The Honourable Member need not suppose, that it is at all in my intention to justify the outrage committed in that Island, by the destruction of the Chapel. I have, from the moment of its occurrence, always expressed, both in public and in private, my abhorrence of a conduct, which I had believed could only have existed on the coast of Africa. From all I have heard of Mr. Shrewsbury, with whom I have no acquaintance, I believe him to be a very respectable man; and this opinion is confirmed by Mr. Ross of Grenada, and other West-Indian Proprietors.—It has fallen to my

lot to have seen a good deal of the inhabitants of Barbadoes, as well those resident in the Colony, as in this country; and I will take upon me to say, that a more honourable class of persons does not exist in any part of His Majesty's dominions. There are many persons there of liberal education and considerable classical attainment, and who are wholly incapable of giving any sanction to the act, of which the Honourable Member complains.—It is true, Sir, that the Honourable Gentleman divided the community into four classes, and stated that, in the destruction of the Chapel, neither the highest or the lowest classes were concerned; but that the mischief was done by persons of a middling rank.—It is, however, to be recollected, that just previously to this act the news of the insurrection in Demerara had arrived; and many persons in Barbadoes were impressed with a notion, that the Methodist Missionary there had been mainly concerned in promoting that tumult.—However lightly the Honourable Gentlemen opposite may think of these matters, I believe that, when any set of individuals conceive their lives and property to be in danger, they do not very coolly deliberate on the probable result of measures which they may take: added to which, about this time

also was most unfortunately published a Letter from Mr. Shrewsbury, written three years before to the Society at home, and which tended materially to inflame matters in that island.

It is much to be regretted, Sir, that the Governor of Barbadoes was advised, that he had no power to call out the Militia of the Colony. I am persuaded that in this conduct he acted from the most honourable and conscientious motives; but, I conceive it would have been a very justifiable exercise of a constitutional duty, to have instantly suppressed this riot, by every means in his power. Although the Honourable Member has acquitted the first and the fourth classes of any share in this disgraceful conduct, enough has been said, by him and by others, to leave an imputed misconduct upon the majority of the inhabitants. I am old enough, Sir, to remember Lord George Gordon's riots in 1780; when, for three days, in the heart of this metropolis, the Government was set at defiance by a lawless mob. As well might the Honourable Gentleman, if he had been a Member of the House at that time, have called upon us for a general censure of the inhabitants of London and Westminster.

We have the best security, Sir, against the recurrence of such measures, in the gracious

act of His Majesty, in sending out the Bishops and Clergy to the West-India Colonies ; and it is gratifying to see the manner in which they have been every where received. This is the best answer to the many calumnies which have been thrown out against the proprietors of Estates in that part of the world, asserting their reluctance to have religious instruction conveyed to their Negroes. Although I should certainly prefer this good work being done by Members of the Established Church, let me not on this occasion omit my debt of gratitude to the Moravian and the Wesleyan Missionaries, who have certainly been very active, and done great service, in many of the Colonies. In St. Kitt's alone there are above six thousand Negroes in the congregations of the two societies to which I have referred ; and, I believe, in Antigua a still larger number.

While I am on this part of the subject, I cannot omit to express my great regret, that the Wesleyan Society at home should have thought fit to disavow the proceedings of their Missionaries in the Island of Jamaica. A more injudicious measure, with a view to the beneficial results which we are all anxiously looking for, could hardly have been taken. These persons, from motives of conscience,

thought fit to give us their observations of what they were daily witnesses of in that Island—an act of justice on their part, and towards which I can boldly assert, from the best authority, that no influence whatever was exercised with them—it was the pure, honest impression of their own minds, and for which I lament to see they have incurred the displeasure of the Board at home.—I think the conduct of the Society, in this instance, is likely to impede, rather than to promote, their future operations in the West-Indies.—I observe, however, in their Report of December last, that their Funds in the year have nearly reached £40,000, and that they have applied a very large sum—nearly one-fifth of it—in the West-India Colonies.

I cannot conclude without expressing my surprise, that the Honourable and Learned Member for Winchelsea should, on this occasion, renew his attacks on the West-India Legislatures; as if the application of harsh terms in this House, to persons at that distance, was the best means of obtaining a compliance with the wishes expressed in this place by the Honourable and Learned Gentleman. I will take leave to express my opinion, that, although they may not advance so rapidly as the Honourable and Learned Gentleman may desire, they are taking

in many of the Colonies—and particularly in Jamaica and Grenada—such measures, as will gradually and safely bring about such an improvement in the condition of the Slave population, as all reasonable persons can desire.

I have no wish, Mr. Speaker, to offer any objection to the Amendment moved by the Right Honourable Secretary for Foreign Affairs, though it is a matter of regret with me, that, after so considerable an interval of time, it has been thought necessary to call upon this House for an expression of its opinion. I should very much have preferred, that the parties offending had been punished by the due course of law.

Mr. Secretary CANNING said, by way of explanation—That it appeared to him, that the Honourable Gentleman who had just addressed the House, considered the Amendment as comprehending the whole of the population of Barbadoes, and as casting a censure upon them all. This, however, was not the case. It reflected upon nothing but the act; for one of the difficulties, and, indeed, the great difficulty of the present case was, that the actors were not known, and therefore could not be brought to justice. The Honourable Gentleman had also alluded to the riots which had taken place in

London, in the year 1780. There was, however, this distinction between that and the present case—the law, for a time, had certainly been defied ; but, every exertion had afterwards been made, by the community, to bring the offenders to justice ; and many of them had been so brought to justice. Such had not been the case at Barbadoes : a great outrage had been there perpetrated ; and, although it must have been committed within the knowledge of half the population of the island, not a single individual had been brought to account. He did not, therefore, intend, in moving the Amendment, that all Barbadoes should be censured by it ; but, as that society could not be in a sound and healthy state, in which such outrages could be perpetrated with impunity, and not only perpetrated with impunity, but threatened to be repeated, he considered an expression of the sense of the House, upon so scandalous and daring a violation of the law, was absolutely called for.

Dr. LUSHINGTON said—It appeared to him, that the Honourable Member for Lymington (Mr. Manning) had failed in making out a defence for the extraordinary conduct of the white population of Barbadoes ; whose supine-

ness, under what had occurred, placed them in a situation, very little better than that of accessories after the fact. The Magistrates of that Island had not only manifested a culpable remissness in the discharge of their duty, but had evidently shewn a disposition to secure impunity to those who had committed the most disgraceful outrages against the laws of the island, and the peace of the community. It was not negligence, but wilful misconduct, that he imputed to some of those Magistrates. It appeared, from the papers on the table of the House, the correctness of which was not disputed, that two of their Magistrates, though cognizant of the outrage about to be committed, had concealed from the Government the knowledge of the illegal acts intended to be done; and they had thereby prevented the timely interference that might have stopped the commencement of the riots, or have enabled the Governor to suppress them before the object was accomplished, and to have detected and brought to punishment the guilty: nor had the Local Authorities, after the disapprobation of the Governor had been publicly declared, redeemed their character, by any zealous exertions to bring to trial the delinquents. He was

satisfied, that the Magistracy of Barbadoes had no just feeling of the atrocity of these transactions, and that their errors were wilful.

The utter inefficiency of the Magistracy was not more to be censured, than the morbid state of feeling in the white Inhabitants was deserving of reprobation. In what way had the Barbadians expressed their abhorrence of those scandalous acts? They had expressed no such abhorrence at all; and were, consequently, guilty of a criminal acquiescence in the offences which had been committed. He would take that opportunity of telling the West-Indians, that, so long as they continued to shew such a total indifference to the due administration of justice, and the feelings of humanity, and such a contempt for the declared sense of that House and of the country, so long should he continue to take every opportunity of exposing unjust and unjustifiable proceedings.

Censure had been cast upon the Wesleyan Society at home, for having manifested their disapprobation of certain resolutions published in Jamaica, by some of their Missionaries; but, instead of censure, that body deserved the highest commendation for their immediate disclaimer of the unauthorized acts of a few of their Missionaries, and for their bold

and uncompromising avowal of the true principles of religion, justice, and humanity. That most respectable body had, very properly, declared their conviction, that Slavery was inconsistent with Christianity. And, was there any man in that House who would rise up and say, that Slavery was consistent with Christianity?—that the mild and benevolent spirit of Christianity warranted a system, under which the wife was torn from her husband, the child from its parent, the sister from her brother? When Gentlemen set about founding measures of legislation on such a system, the ground sunk from under them: there was nothing in nature or in reason to support the superstructure. It was no wonder that the House should feel itself in an embarrassed situation, with regard to the government of these Colonies: for, whenever an attempt was made to legislate on a system of Slavery, difficulties would always arise, to perplex and confound the sagacity of the most skilful legislator.

He approved of the recent measures for sending out two Bishops to the West-Indies; but he sincerely regretted, that the first act of the Bishop of Jamaica should be to appoint the Rev. Mr. Bridges as his Chaplain—a gentleman who was only known as the libeller of Mr. Wilber-

force. Such an appointment, he must acknowledge, had considerably shaken the trust which he might otherwise have been inclined to place in the new Establishment. For, however he might differ from many of the opinions of Mr. Wilberforce; he could not avoid saying, that that enlightened and benevolent man had, by his invaluable exertions to obtain an abolition of the barbarous traffic in human flesh, built up for himself a character, which time could not efface, and which was entitled to the applause and everlasting gratitude of every one who was an enemy of Slavery.

Mr. FOWELL BUXTON rose to reply, and spoke as follows:—

I hardly know that it is necessary for me to trouble the House with any reply. No defence of the conduct of the rioters has been offered. The Honourable Under Secretary has borne testimony to the accuracy of my statement; and, the Right Honourable Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs has, with his usual manliness, given vent to feelings of indignation, in language at least as strong as any that I used. Upon what, then, have we now to dispute? The facts are confessedly true—the inference is undeniable. The Right Honourable Gentle-

man alters a phrase or two of my Resolution. With this I am abundantly contented : for he has left me—and that is all I care for—the declaration of the Commons of England, that we will have religious toleration in the West-Indies.

I rejoice that the discussion has taken place. It has given an opportunity to my Hon. and Learned Friend (Mr. Brougham) to state the course he will pursue, in the next Session ; and every man who is interested in the welfare of the Negro population will join me in considering his pledge, and the dedication of his most extraordinary talents to the cause, as the greatest matter of congratulation, which we have yet enjoyed. I would hope, however, that the Planters will avert the necessity of his interference. I would entreat them to take warning, before it is too late ; I would say to them, “ You have interests greater far than any other class ; and interests which will be decided by your conduct now. The Abolitionists would pretend, that such enormities as those which I have described, are natural to Slavery. We do insinuate, that, in a state of society where one class are Masters and the other Slaves, there must be, and will be, cruelties, and blood, and a deadly hatred of all those who would impart knowledge or Christianity to the Negro. But,

it is your part to dispel the delusion, if it be one—to separate Slavery from these its wretched accompaniments,—to sever your system from a system of fierce persecution—to give the people of England the satisfaction of knowing, that there is law and justice for the Negro and his Teacher. You are in a perilous condition. The reproach of Slave-holding is as much as you can endure. If you expect favour,—if you ask toleration from the people of England, you must demonstrate, that Slavery is not inseparably connected with a host of other, and, if it be possible, greater evils, than itself.”

If I were merely an enemy of Slavery—if its extinction were the single (as I admit it to be the chief) object of my life—I should say—“Go on—persevere—pour needful conviction on the minds of the most incredulous—demonstrate to the world, that for eight hundred thousand of our fellow creatures, there is no mercy to be expected.” “Proceed,” I should say, “open the eyes of the people of England. You have had your triumphs. The Missionary Smith sleeps in his grave, branded as a traitor—the Missionary Shrewsbury is an exile ; his persecutors keep the anniversary of his sufferings, as a festival—the gallant Austin, because he acted with more true heroism than the conquerors of

Austerlitz and Waterloo—because he singly stemmed the torrent of persecution, has lost his golden certainties of preferment, and is at this moment earning the scanty bread of a stipendiary Curate in an English village. Proceed, then, faster and faster: you are doing our work: you are accelerating the downfall of Slavery. A few more such triumphs, a few more such speaking testimonies to the merits of your system,—and the people of England, with one heart, will abhor it, and with one voice will dissolve it.”

But, enemy as I am to Slavery—and nothing human shall win me or drive me to be any thing else than a foe to Slavery—I am not for its rapid and terrible overthrow; and, therefore, I raise my voice in this House, warning the Planters, that if they repeat these outrages—that if they will link persecution to Slavery—Slavery, which already totters, will fall.

The original Motion, and also the Amendment, were then, with the leave of the House, withdrawn, and

It was resolved, *nemine contradicente*,

“ That an humble Address be presented to his Majesty, to represent to his Majesty, that this House, having taken into their most se-

rious consideration the Papers laid before them, relating to the demolition of the Methodist Chapel in Barbadoes, deem it their duty to declare, that they view with the utmost indignation that scandalous and daring violation of the law ; and having seen with great satisfaction the instructions which have been sent out by his Majesty's Secretary of State to the Governor of Barbadoes, to prevent a recurrence of similar outrages, they humbly assure his Majesty of their readiness to concur in every measure which his Majesty may deem necessary for securing ample protection and religious toleration to all his Majesty's subjects in that part of his Majesty's dominions."

FINIS.

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